8 Mini Puppy Posters! ★ Enter a Silly Hairdo Contest

americangirlmagazine.com

American Girl

March/April 2009



15 fun ideas for a slumber party

* See if you can solve a mystery!

* Make colorful paper flowers

PLUS! More advice for tough problems

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Plus Mini Questions Book



Win an American Girl sleeping bag and a copy of the book *Snooze-a-Palooza!* To enter, send a postcard by April 16, 2009, with your first and last name and address to:

Win It!—M/A 2009
***American Girl* magazine**
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Official Rules

1. Employees of American Girl and its affiliates and their families are not eligible.
2. Only one entry per family.
3. To be valid, all entries must be received by mail by April 16, 2009. Entries may not be faxed or e-mailed. **A parent or guardian must sign the entry.**
4. One winner will be chosen at random.
5. All entries become the property of American Girl and will not be returned.
6. Void where prohibited by law.

Cover photo: Jose Martinez

Girls EXPRESS

Cheep, Cheep



Spring is here! These sweet birds are easy to make and a treat to eat.

1 Wash hands. Cover a cookie sheet with wax paper. Pour 1 cup **chocolate crisp rice cereal** into one pile on the sheet and ½ cup **plain crisp rice cereal** into a separate pile.

2 Ask an adult to melt 1 tablespoon **butter** in a saucepan over low heat. Add ¾ cup **mini marshmallows,** and stir constantly until melted. Ask the adult to pour the mixture over each pile, with twice as much on the chocolate pile.

3 Let the mixture cool several minutes. Smear butter on your hands. Mix each pile with your hands until the cereal is evenly coated.

4 Form a nest by pressing the chocolate mixture into a small buttered bowl. Form a bird with the plain mixture by making a small ball for the head, a larger ball for the body, and a flat rectangle for the tail. Let all pieces set overnight.

5 Press the pieces together to make the bird. Decorate with **mini chocolate chips, soft candy** snipped with scissors, and a small **gummy worm.**

Meet an AG Reader



Gwendolyn B.
Age 10, Oregon

I live with...
my mama and daddy, my brothers (one older, one younger), and our cat, Spotted-Leap.

On a Saturday afternoon, you usually can find me...
riding my bike in the park, or playing catch.

Things no one would guess about me: I'm *vegan* (VEE-gun), which means that I don't eat anything that's made from animals. Also, when I get older, I want to have a band and to play professional baseball.

My proudest day: The day my little brother was born. I am proud that I can teach him stuff such as what stinging nettles look like.

I can't live without... my cat. She's trouble, but I love her.

My favorite snack: Yummy plums from our plum tree

My favorite part of AG:
I like "Help!" People write things that I wonder about, so the advice helps me.

Introduce Yourself!

To find out how you could be a featured reader, go to americangirlmagazine.com and click on "Start the fun."

Illustrations: Tracey Wood

Shining Star

Hannah W. couldn't believe her eyes when she looked into the garbage can in the school cafeteria. She saw many, many discarded items that could be recycled. With all that stuff going right into the trash, "I thought the earth would get cluttered up," Hannah says.

At home that night, Hannah was still upset about the waste. Her mom said that if Hannah wanted to make a difference, she should come up with a plan for change. So the eight-year-old California girl got to work. With help from a teacher, Hannah researched a proposal for making her school greener. She asked students who ate hot lunch off the paper trays to recycle instead of tossing them. The principal approved Hannah's plan, and the students got to work.

Now the school recycles more than 150 lunch trays a day. That's 750 trays a week—or 3,000 trays a month! Hannah feels great that she helped her school be a little friendlier to the earth. "When I see everyone recycling, I feel happy and proud."



You can shine, too. Have you noticed ways in which your school is more wasteful than it should be? Talk to your teacher or the student council to find the best way to start being green.

"Rainbow"

colors of ease
streaking through the trees
when rain leaves
it pops up
it makes a pretty sight
(though I think they forgot white)
ah! the rainbow is
gone



Erin J.
Age 10, Iowa

Laffateria

Make us laugh! Send your best joke to the address on page 7.

What do you get when you cross a bronco and a kangaroo?



A buckaroo!

Hannah C.
Age 10, Texas

What do you get when you cross a centipede and a parrot?



A walkie-talkie!

Hannah M.
Age 10, Indiana

What do you get when you cross a cow and a duck?

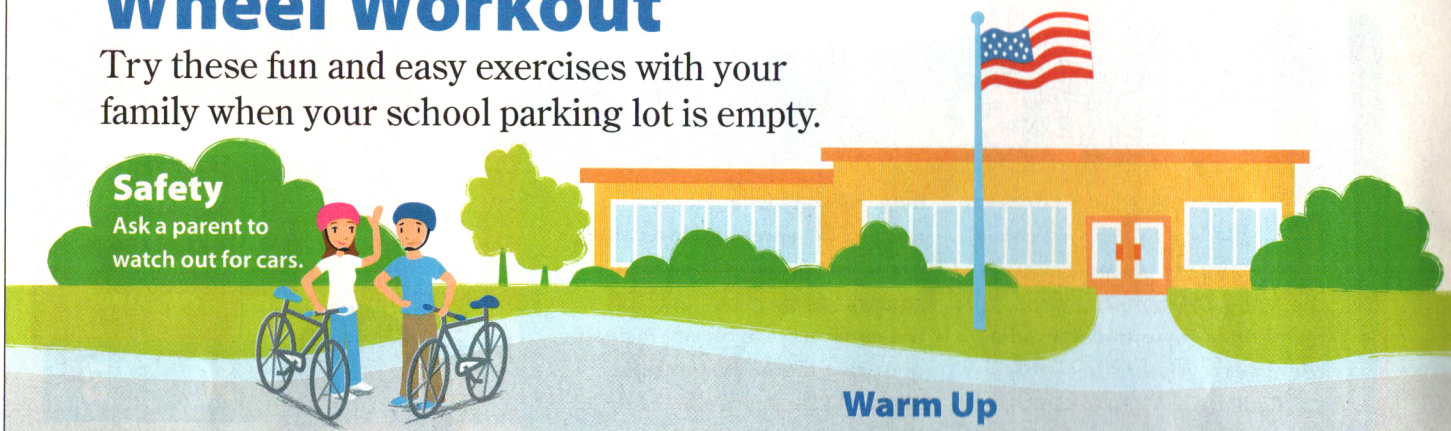


Milk and quackers!

Alexia M.
Age 11, Pennsylvania

Wheel Workout

Try these fun and easy exercises with your family when your school parking lot is empty.



Safety

Ask a parent to watch out for cars.

Warm Up

Ride for a few minutes at a swift pace near the back of the lot—away from any entrances where cars could come. Try to raise your heart rate without wearing yourself out.

Balance

With your hands on the handlebars and feet on the pedals, balance on your still bike. If you start to tip, use a foot to steady yourself and then go back to balancing. Do this until you have steadied yourself at least 15 times.





Sprints!

Start in a spot where you can ride a long distance without anything getting in your way. Pedal as hard as you can until you're about three-quarters of the way to your end point, and then begin to slow down so that you can stop without slamming on the brakes. Do these sprints until you're breathing quickly or until your legs start to get tired.

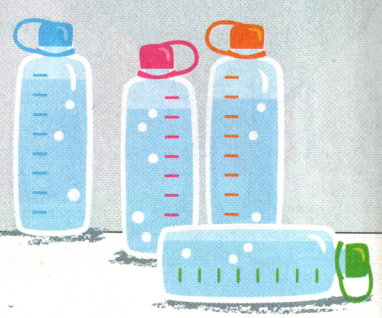


Stripes

Plan a pattern to ride based on the stripes painted on your lot. You can weave in and out of spaces or ride along until you cross a stripe, where you could stop, turn, and head in the other direction. Make it interesting—and challenging. Do this for about 10 minutes or until you get tired.

Cool Down

Ride in circles at the back of the lot at a slow, easy pace. Then ride home safely!



AG on the Move

Where have you and your magazine been? Send your photos to the address on page 7.



Niagara Falls, New York

"Last summer, I visited Niagara Falls in New York. This photo was taken on a boat ride that took us so close to the falls that we could feel the mist on our faces. Awesome!"

Laila S.
Age 12, Massachusetts



Paris, France

"I saw a lot of great things on my trip to Paris, but my favorite was the Eiffel Tower. We ate lunch in a restaurant high in the tower, and the views were incredible. I hope that I can go back someday."

Jessie K.
Age 12, New York



Harvard University

"On a family trip to Boston, we visited the historical horseshoe-shaped Harvard Stadium. Built in 1903, it was the first permanent arena for college sports in America."

Jenny D.
Age 10, New York

Creative Corner

Funny Photos



Cut out card. Flip over for directions.



AG Poll

Answer these questions, and then turn the page to see how your answers compare to those of other AG readers.

What do you want most in your bedroom?

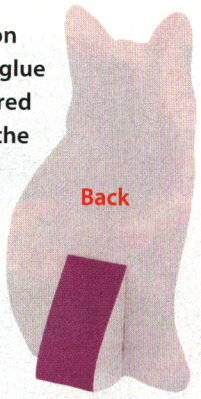
- a bigger closet
- a mini fridge
- a big new bed
- a reading nook

How do you like to wear your hair?

- long and wavy
- with a headband
- up in a ponytail
- short and cute

Funny Photos

Cut a pet or a person out of a photo and glue it to a piece of colored paper. Cut around the photo, leaving a border. Decorate with stickers and rhinestones. Cut a thin strip of paper about 5 inches long and fold it into a triangle. Glue the side of the triangle to the back of the photo. Let dry.



AG Poll

What girls told us at americangirlmagazine.com:



For their rooms, girls want...

42% a mini fridge

25% a reading nook

19% a bigger closet

14% a big new bed

Girls like to wear their hair...

41% up in a ponytail

31% long and wavy

17% short and cute

11% with a headband

To answer our weekly poll question, go to americangirlmagazine.com and click on "Fun for Girls."

Reader Recipe



Claire Q.
Age 11, Illinois

Claire's Banana-Chocolate Snack

Use a butter knife to cut a peeled **banana**, making two short halves. Then use the knife to cut a long ditch along the top of each half. Eat any pieces that you remove. Then, press **chocolate chips** into the ditches, and enjoy!



Send your yummy—and easy—recipes to the address on page 7.

True Story

Olivia didn't mind living at the hotel—it had a *really* nice pool.



Dear American Girl,

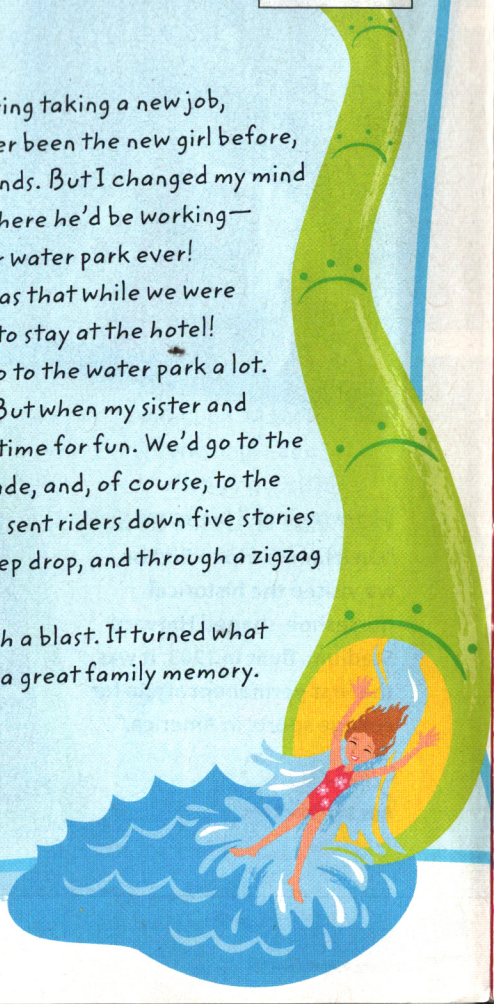
When my dad told us he was considering taking a new job, I was not excited to move. I had never been the new girl before, and I didn't want to leave all my friends. But I changed my mind when Dad took us to see the place where he'd be working—the biggest, coolest hotel and indoor water park ever!

The best part of Dad's new job was that while we were waiting to sell our old house, we got to stay at the hotel! Since I'm home-schooled, I got to go to the water park a lot. Work came before play, of course. But when my sister and I were done with our studies, it was time for fun. We'd go to the indoor playground, to the huge arcade, and, of course, to the water park. Our favorite water ride sent riders down five stories into a ginormous funnel, down a steep drop, and through a zigzag to the end of the tunnel.

Living at the water park was such a blast. It turned what might have been a scary move into a great family memory.

Sincerely,

Olivia B.
Age 13, Wisconsin



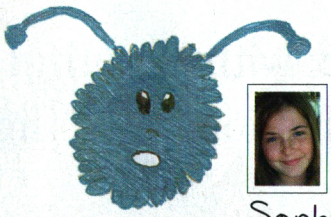
AG Art Gallery

Readers sent us their best *manga* (mahn-guh), which is Japanese-style artwork.

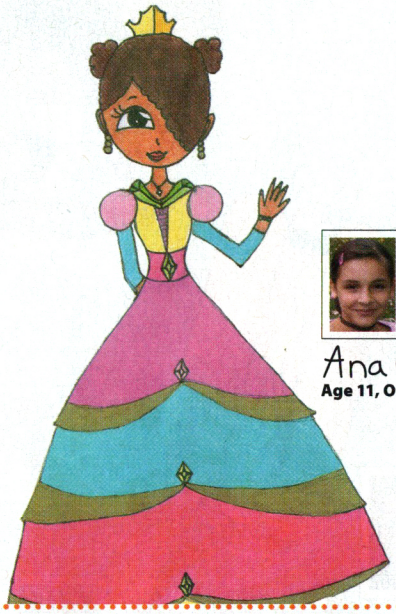
We're looking for artwork for our gallery. Send color copies of your **original artworks** to the address below. Sorry, we can't return entries.



Clara H.
Age 12, Colorado



Sophie E.
Age 11, California



Ana C.
Age 11, Ohio





Maddi F.
Age 12, Indiana





Malia Z.
Age 13, Nevada

Short & Sweet

Make someone's day with a small act of kindness.

As it gets a little warmer outside, your dog (or cat) will start to shed his or her thick winter coat. Spend some time grooming your pet, putting the fur into the trash when you're done. Your pet will thank you for the attention—and so will the person whose chore is vacuuming!



Send us your **ideas** for little acts that get **big thanks.** Write to the address at right.

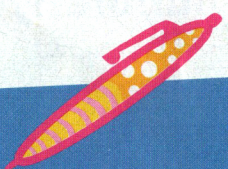
Write to us!





Envelope art by
Sabrina H.
Age 11, Georgia

Send us a cool envelope! Print our address neatly on the front and your return address on the back.



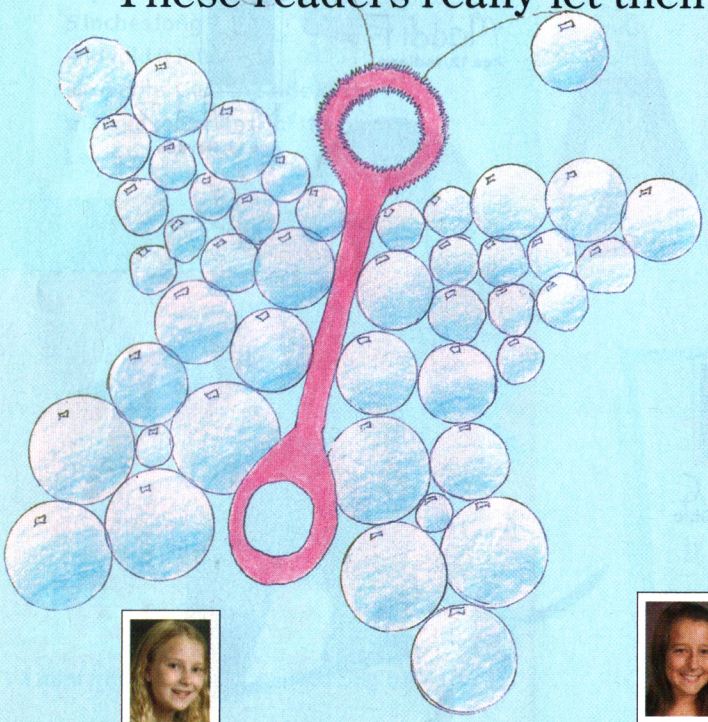
Be sure to include your...

- **first and last name**
- **address and phone number**
- **birth date, including year**
- **school photo or snapshot**

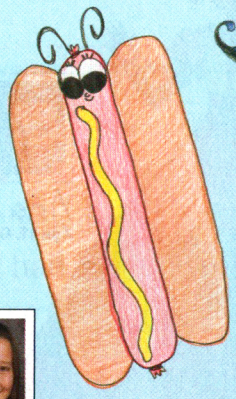
We can't print every letter, but we read everything you send to us. Hope to hear from you soon! ★

Wonder Wings

Nearly 2,000 girls filled our mailbox with beautiful butterflies. These readers really let their imaginations take flight.



Bubblefly
Madison H.
Age 11, Idaho



Food Flight
Jayne S.
Age 13, Michigan





Beautyfly
Cara F.
Age 13, Ohio



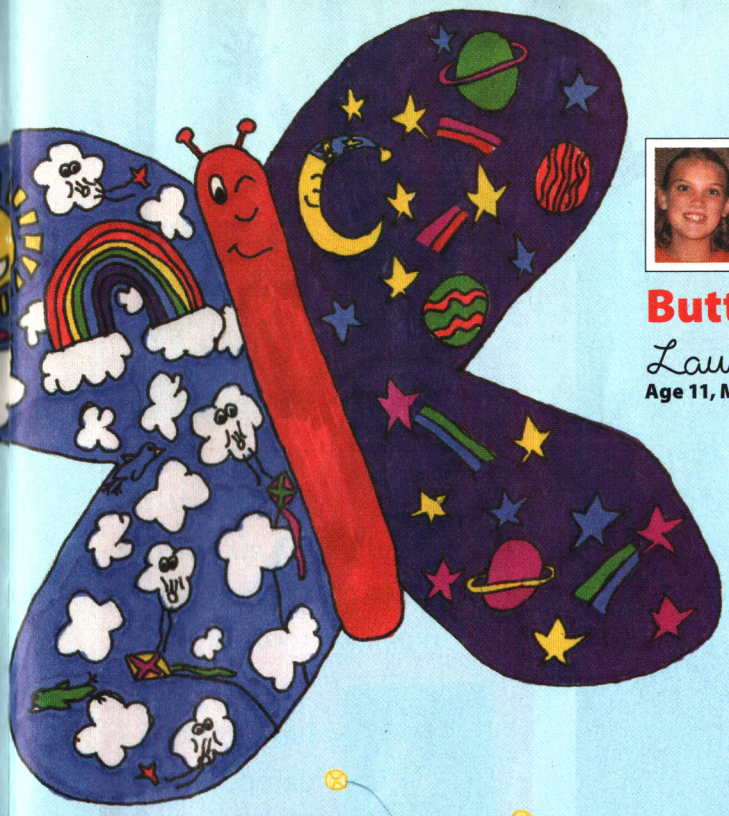


Wings and Strings
Guadalupe O.
Age 11, California



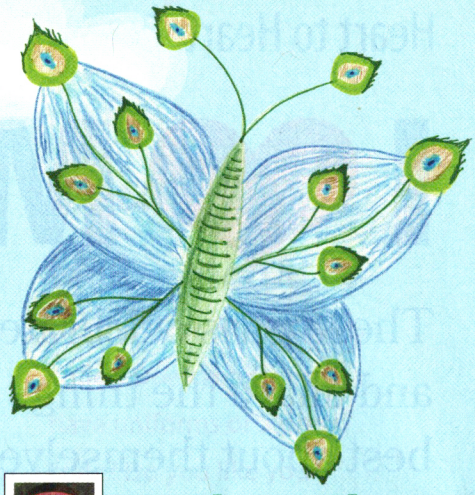


Lovebug
Janine F.
Age 10, New York



Butterfly Skies

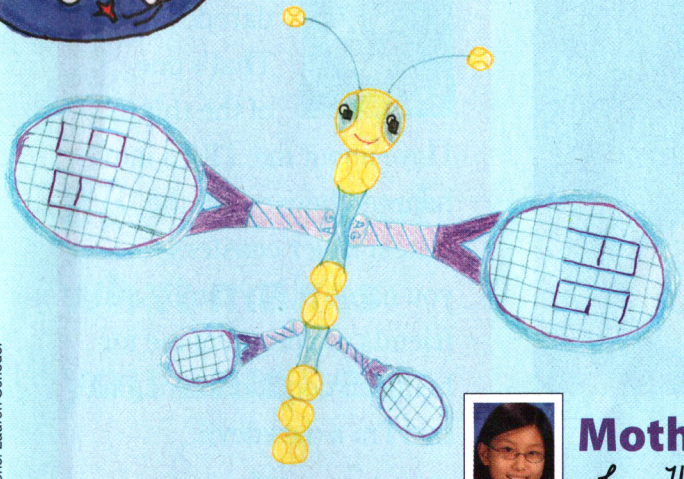
Lauren B.
Age 11, Minnesota





Feathery Flutter

Ayla A.
Age 11, Illinois





Mothballs

Lucy W.
Age 11, Illinois



Sweet Wings

Amber W.
Age 12, West Virginia



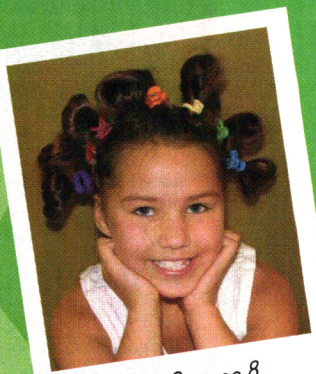


Beachy Butterfly

Ameera H.
Age 10, California

New Contest: Wacky Hairdos

Send us a photo of the **craziest** hairstyle you can dream up! Weave quirky braids, create a wild ponytail, or include unique accessories. Make your silly style one of a kind! Creativity counts, but no makeup, please—we want you looking your natural best. Send your photo to the address on page 7, along with your first and last name, address, and birth date. Deadline: April 10, 2009. Winners will appear in the September/October 2009 issue. Sorry, we can't return entries.



Paris B., age 8

Illustrations: Lauren Scheuer

I ♥ Me!

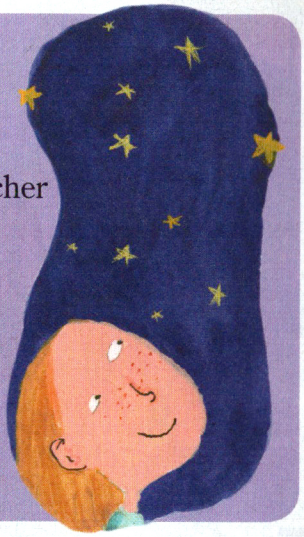
These girls celebrate who they are and share the things they like best about themselves.





Sometimes people make fun of the freckles on my nose. But once, my third-grade teacher told me that a face without freckles was like a night sky without stars. So now if people ever make fun of me, I just think I am beautiful the way I am!

Julie B.
Age 11, Texas





I am 100% daredevil. That's one of the things I love about me. I'll go into haunted houses, on the fastest roller coasters—you name it. My family and friends are proud of me for being so confident. I'm glad that I'm a daredevil.

Stephanie T.
Age 13, Oregon





I like that I know how to knit. One day, I brought my knitting to school and my classmates teased me. I stopped knitting for a while. But then I realized that I liked to knit and decided to keep on doing it, no matter what others say.

Renee G.
Age 9, New York



The thing that I like best about myself is my body because it's able to keep me going through gymnastics and soccer. Even though I'm small, my spirit is big, just like my heart. I flip big, tumble hard, and can do awesome tricks!

Emily B.
Age 10, Minnesota



The best thing about me is my ability to write. It's my favorite thing to do in the world. When I grow up, I want to become a professional writer and have my own bookstore.

Michaila P.
Age 10, Pennsylvania

Big Truth

Be proud of what makes you unique.



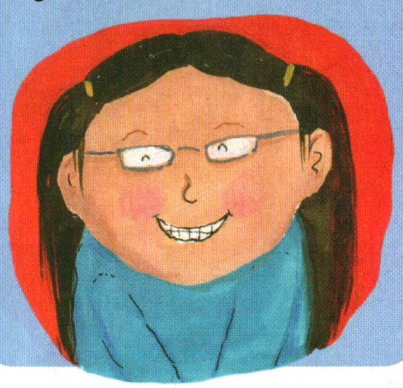
I love my name, Neely. It's a unique name and that's why I like it so much. Also, nobody ever has the same name as I do when I start a new school year, so teachers usually learn my name the fastest.

Neely W.
Age 12, Mississippi



I like my smile. My teachers and friends have said that my smile is beautiful. Sometimes I cheer up my friends and family with my smile when they're feeling down. I wouldn't change my smile for anything.

Anai A.
Age 13, California





My favorite thing about myself is that I'm kind and willing to be anyone's friend. I really like to meet new people and make new friends. When someone has no one to play with, I make time to play with them.

Andy B.
Age 10, Michigan

Speak from Your Heart

Next subject: School dress codes. Does your school have uniforms or a dress code? Do you like your school's dress code, or do you dislike it? Why? Do you have any tips on how to show your individuality and style while staying within your school's rules? Send us your thoughts about dress codes. Send answers, name, birth date, and school photo to the address on page 7. Deadline: April 10, 2009. Some answers will appear in the September/October 2009 issue. ★



Illustrations: Laura Cornell

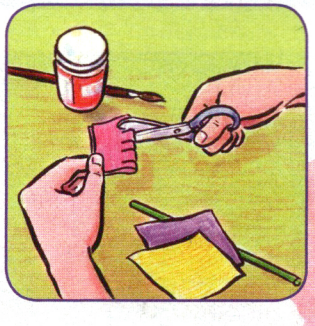
Craft

Bitty Buds

Turn paper party streamers into fun flowers.

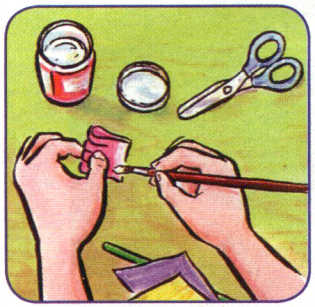
YOU WILL NEED

- Paper party streamers
- Ruler
- Scissors
- Mod Podge
- Paintbrush
- Bendable straws

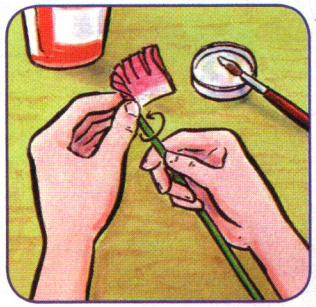


1 Make a petal by cutting a 3-inch piece of paper streamer. Fold it in half. Cut 4 small snips into the folded side.

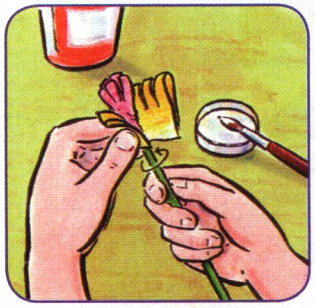




2 Brush a small amount of Mod Podge on both the bendy end of the straw and the unfolded ends of the paper streamer.



3 Tightly wrap the petal around the straw.



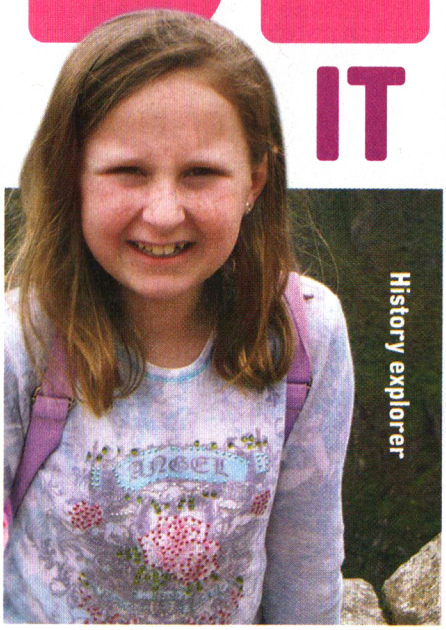
4 Repeat steps 1 through 3 five more times. Let dry. ★

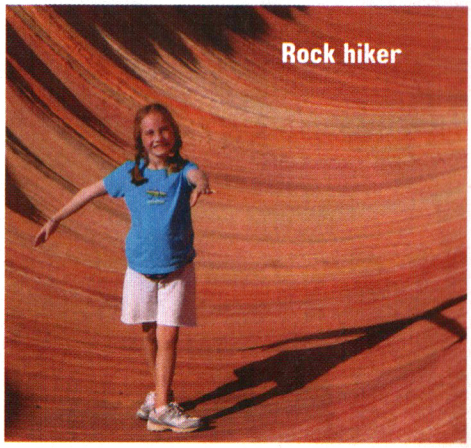
Illustrations: Shawn Banner

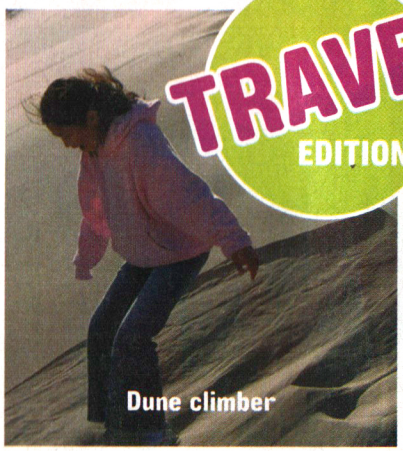


I CAN'T BELIEVE IT HAPPENED TO ME!

TRAVEL EDITION

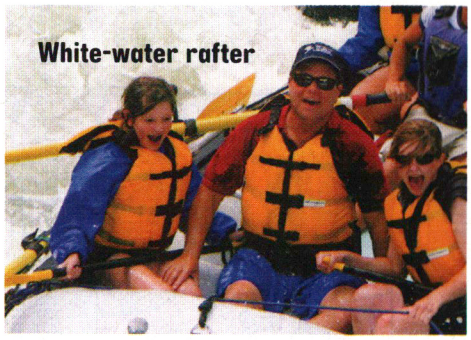

History explorer

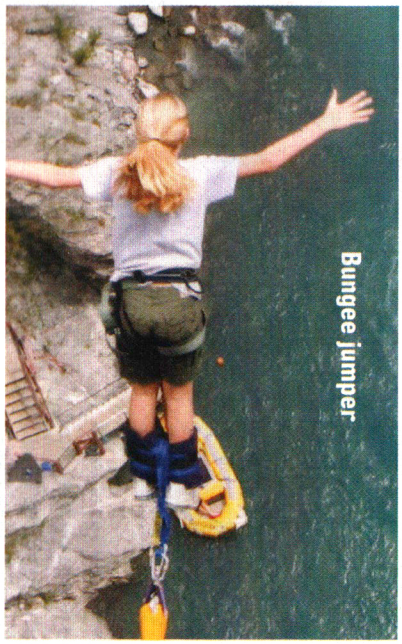

Rock hiker


Dune climber


Scuba diver


Glacier scaler

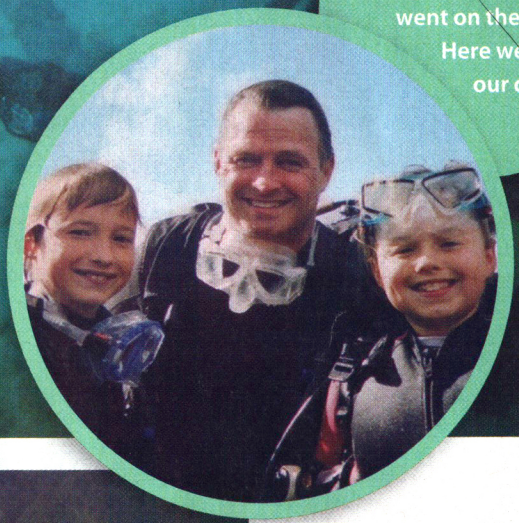

White-water rafter


Bungee jumper

From swimming in the sea to flying through the air, these readers proved that girls can do **ANYTHING.**

Scuba Diving

I went scuba diving for the first time on a trip to Hawaii. The equipment is very heavy, but you don't notice it once you're underwater. The best part of our dive was when our instructor gave me a brittle starfish. It was so beautiful to look at, and it floated in and out between my hands.



My twin brother, Chad, and I took a day lesson before our family went on the dive. Here we are with our dad.

Olivia H.
Age 12, Texas



Lauren C.
Age 9, Georgia

Visiting History

During a trip to Peru, my family visited the ancient city of Machu Picchu. After a long journey by plane, train, bus, and finally by foot, we arrived high in the mountains. It was totally amazing to see this "lost city" where people had lived so long ago, that most people only get to see in books.



Machu Picchu is listed as one of the Seven Wonders of the World.

White-Water Rafting

On a trip to a ranch in Colorado, my family got to go white-water rafting. What a thrill! My friend, Jess, and I loved screaming through all the rapids. My poor dad's ears were pretty sore—he was sitting between us!



Mariette P.
Age 13, Texas

Photo: Colorado Whitewater Photography

Hiking "The Wave"

My parents are hiking guides, so we go on a lot of adventures. But I'll always remember hiking through a rock formation in Arizona called "The Wave." Only 20 people are allowed inside it each day, and my family had to enter a lottery in order to get a permit. We were so excited to go—and so amazed to see such beauty up close.



Different colors swirl through the sandstone that makes up The Wave, which is a chute that has eroded through the rock.

Aspen L.
Age 9, Utah

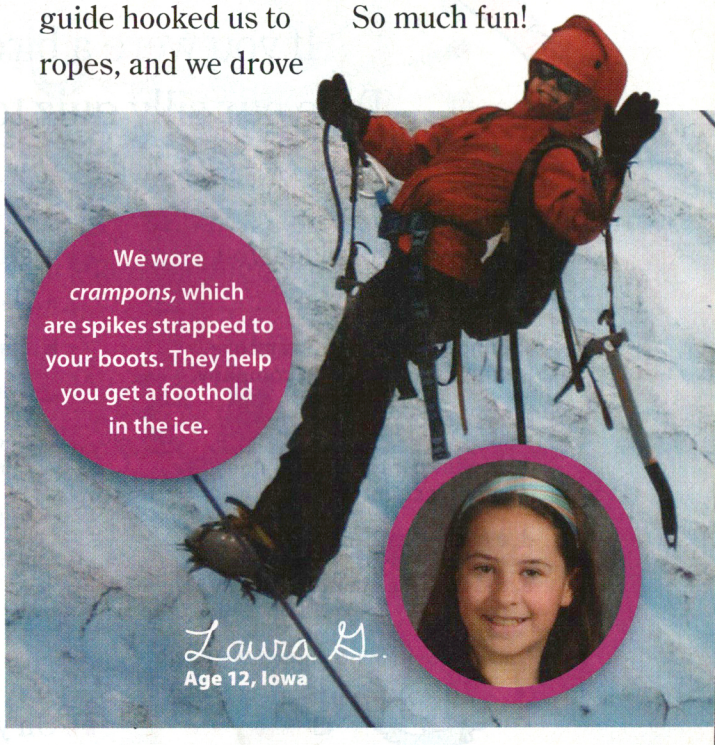


Bungee Jumping

I tried bungee jumping during a trip with my family to New Zealand. With my feet tied together for the jump, I wobbled out to a platform high above a wide river. When the worker said, "3, 2, 1, bungeeeeee," I jumped out—headfirst! I was falling fast, but I actually felt like I was flying.

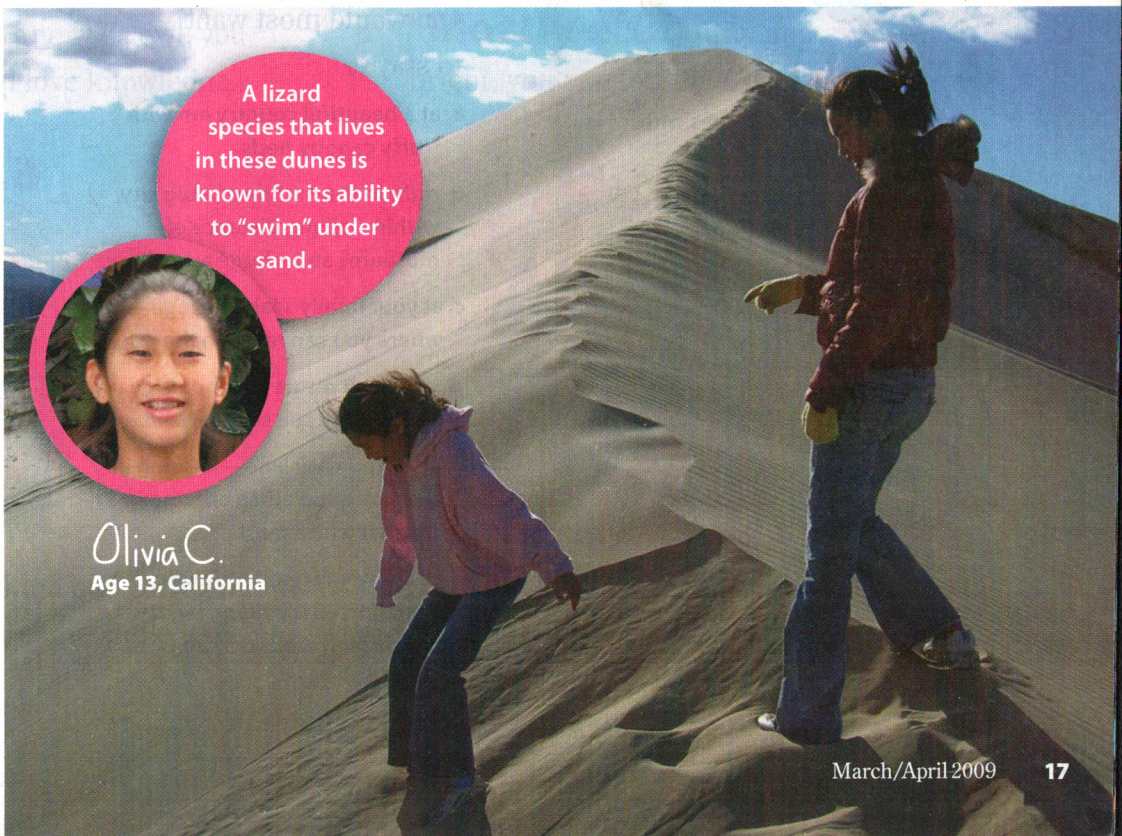
Scaling a Glacier

During a trip to Alaska, my family and I got to climb a glacier. We flew out to the glacier in a helicopter. Our guide hooked us to ropes, and we drove ice axes right into the glacier to help pull ourselves up. I slipped a little at first, but it got easier with practice. So much fun!



Climbing the Dunes

My older sister, Tamara, and I hiked to the top of some giant sand dunes during a family vacation to the Mojave Desert. Climbing a mountain of sand was hard work, but it was sure worth it. At the top, I felt like I was on top of the entire desert. When we were done, Tamara and I slid all the way to the bottom. Awesome! ★

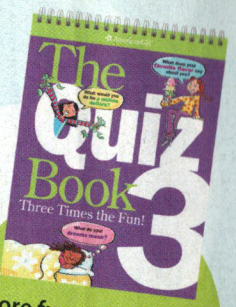


Feathered Friends



If you were a bird, what kind would you be? Take our silly quiz to figure out which way you fly.

by Brette Sember



More fun quizzes can be found in *The Quiz Book 3*, available in bookstores.

1. When you get older, you would love a job as …

a. Princess Odette in *Swan Lake* with a touring ballet company.

b. the editor of a magazine.

c. a volunteer teaching children in another country.

d. a cutting-edge fashion designer.

e. the star of a hilarious new TV series.

f. an award-winning photojournalist.



2. Your perfect day would be …

a. shopping for antiques with your older sisters.

b. staying up half the night reading a novel and sleeping past noon.

c. playing board games with your family in front of the fireplace.

d. creating fun new hairstyles with your friends.

e. painting your bedroom fuchsia and lime.

f. hunting for seashells on the beach.

3. Your favorite top is …

a. elegant and lacy.

b. dark and serious.

c. soft and comfortable.

d. decorated with glitter and rhinestones.

e. bright and colorful.

f. plain and simple.



4. On your dream vacation, you would most want to stay …

a. at a beautiful country inn with fluffy canopy beds.

b. right in the middle of a big city, within walking distance of museums and a huge art gallery.

c. at your family's lake cottage—where you can relax on the dock.

d. at a posh resort with poolside waiters and spa service.

e. on a tropical island—basking in the warm sun and frolicking in the soft white sand.

f. at a campground in the wild west, horseback riding by day and singing around a campfire at night.

5. You most love to shop at …

a. La Boutique, an expensive designer shop.

b. Quill & Ink, a store that sells stationery and fun pens.

c. Hometowne Mall, where you can find everything you want under one roof.

d. Glamour Girls jewelry and accessories store.

e. The Buck Stop dollar shop, where you can get lots of cool cheap stuff.

f. Good Sports sporting-goods store.

6. The scent that you like the most is …

a. a bundle of freshly picked lilacs.

b. a brand-new book.

c. Dad's delicious dinner cooking.

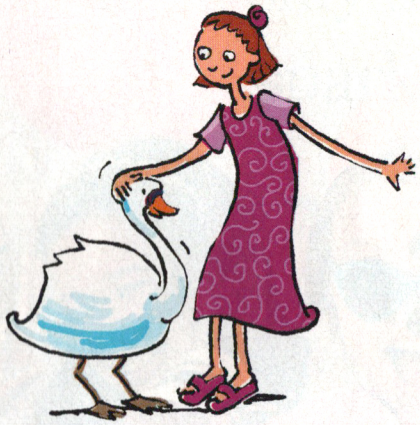
d. Your freshly shampooed hair.

e. Gumdrops—or any fruity candy.

f. The air outside after a spring rain shower.



Answers



Mostly a's: You're like a swan and love graceful, elegant things.



Mostly d's: Like the peacock, you adore making a big splash.



Mostly b's: Like the wise owl, you are a night person and love knowledge.



Mostly e's: Quirky and bright, you resemble the parrot.



Mostly c's: You're kind and caring and resemble the dove, the symbol of peace.



Mostly f's: Like the eagle, you love freedom and to soar in the great outdoors! ★

Illustrations: Lauren Scheuer



Pajama Jam

Hold a pajama fashion show! Walk down a pretend catwalk to music. Don't forget to smile for the camera.

It's a silly slumber party full of sparkle and smiles!

Glam-a-Pajama



It's a party!

Party Favors

Get the party started by giving your friends a small gift bag filled with lots of glam. Include a small hairbrush and a pair of flip-flops to use for a craft. These items can be found at a dollar store or craft store. Other fun things would be a small mirror and sparkly hair accessories.


No one can resist this cake . . .


Guests will love these favors.

Invitation

Cut cute mismatched pajamas from patterned scrapbook paper. Glue a plain T-shirt shape to a patterned pant cut-out and write the party information on the T-shirt. Ask guests to bring an old pillowcase to use for a craft.

Colorful Cake

Turn a plain cake into a colorful masterpiece! Press small and chewy candies onto a store-bought vanilla-frosted cake. Keep the cake in the refrigerator until guests arrive.

Photos: Jose Martinez Styling: Jennie Brent, Jesse Lawson, Chris O'Shea, Lacy Redway

Pillowcase Pouch

Use an old pillowcase for this craft. Draw a shape, such as a star, on a piece of fleece. Place the shape on top of another color of fleece and trace around it, leaving a border. Cut it out. Repeat until you have 4 different sizes. Using fabric glue, attach the shapes to the pillowcase. Let dry. Tie a ribbon around the bag to close it. Use the bag for your next slumber party—it's perfect for holding your sleepover gear.

Sleepy-Time Headband

Keep your hair from getting too messy while you sleep. Tightly tie ribbons into tiny bows around a stretchy headband. Trim the ends of the ribbons.



Sleeping Bag Zipper Pull

Cut felt into shapes and use fabric glue to attach the layers together. Cut a slit near the top and string a ribbon through. Tie it to your zipper and trim the ends.



Fuzzy feet are fun.

Fuzzy Feet

Turn a pair of flip-flops into silly slippers. Trace each flip-flop onto fleece. Cut out the shapes, and cut a slit where the thong needs to fit. Glue the fleece to the flip-flop. Glue a craft boa to the thong. Let dry.



Sparkles and smiles.

So Smoothies

In a blender, combine 3 cups vanilla frozen yogurt with 3 cups orange juice. Ask an adult to blend well. Pour into glasses. Serves two.



Take a sip . . .

Bright Barrettes

Cut a strip of non-adhesive VELCRO® brand closure into small squares. Glue rhinestones to one side. Let dry. To use, separate squares, place a thin layer of hair in between the squares, and press together.





It's glitzy and glamorous!

Glitzy Goodies

Make a brush beautiful by glueing rhinestones to the back of a mini hairbrush. Let dry. Do the same to a mirror.

Do a Dance

Girls stand in a line with their eyes covered. No one opens her eyes until she has been tapped on the shoulder. The girl at one end starts by opening her eyes, tapping the girl next to her, showing her a dance move, and then covering her eyes. The second girl taps the third girl, shows her the dance move, adds her own dance move, and covers her eyes again. Keep passing the dance on until everyone has added a move. The last girl says, "Eyes open!" and shows everyone the entire dance routine.



Nice moves!



Looking glam, girls!

Hilarious Hairdos

Ask guests to sit in a circle. Each girl turns to the person on her right. In the middle of the circle is a pile of hair accessories—headbands, barrettes, and hair elastics. On "Go!" everyone must style the hair of the girl in front of her in only 5 minutes. You can't check the hairstyle from the front to see how it looks—just try to make the silliest hairstyle you can! Be careful not to pull or tangle anyone's hair.



Mini Questions Book

Tear out the book between pages 24 and 25. Pass the book around to your friends. At the end, read everyone's answers aloud.

Bedtime Story

This game is fun to play when you're lying in your sleeping bags. Start the game by passing a stuffed animal back and forth to each girl. Every time you get the stuffed animal, you have to add one word to the story. See how long—and silly—your bedtime story gets. No sleeping until the story is over!

Quiz

What's Your

by Dr. Lynda Madison

Where and how you eat are just as important as what you eat. Take this quiz to find your eating style—and tips to make sure you're getting the nutrition you need.



Which statements sound like you?

- ❑ I could win a blue ribbon in the "World's Slowest Eater" contest.
- ❑ The crumbs in the couch are mine—I eat while watching TV.



- ❑ Sometimes I eat my dinner standing up.
- ❑ I can polish off a whole box of snacks while I'm doing something else.
- ❑ I like to make my plate look pretty before I dig in for the first bite.
- ❑ I spend more time in the drive-through than at the dinner table.
- ❑ I often help my parents make recipes from scratch.
- ❑ Sometimes I'm surprised to find my plate empty. Where did all the food go?
- ❑ Breakfast? Who has time for breakfast?



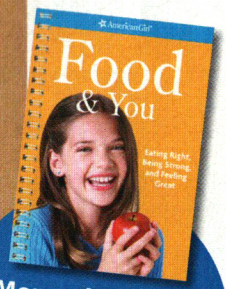
Eating Style?



If you answered mostly **RED:** You can do lots of things at once. But if you eat while you're distracted, you won't really enjoy your food and might eat more than you need. Instead of snacking while you watch TV or do homework, look for other things to do with your hands. Doodle on a pad of paper or squeeze a squishy ball.

If you answered mostly **GREEN:** You enjoy everything about food, from cooking it to savoring it at the table. Eating slowly is a good thing—it gives your brain time to know when you are full. Just try not to nibble too much before or after the meal.

If you answered mostly **BLUE:** Whew! You're a busy girl. Try to make time for at least one sit-down meal a day. When you're on the go, don't grab salty, high-fat foods just because they're convenient. Pack healthy snacks in small bags that you can grab on your way out the door. ★



More advice can be found in *Food & You*, available in bookstores.


USED CARS
THE REGISTER
Family Vacation
Zoom Comics

The Insect Project Mystery

by Kathleen O'Dell

Josie's homework is missing, and it's bugging her. Can *you* figure out where it went?

Josie was enjoying a lazy Saturday morning. Everyone in her family sat around in robes and pajamas, including her Aunt Kate. Actually, Aunt Kate was wearing Josie's mom's pajamas. The airline had lost all of her luggage in Denver.

"Josie, weren't you supposed to start working on your bug report?" asked her big sister, Megan.

"Mrs. Layton says not to call them bugs," Josie said. "They're insects. It's an entymology report."

"Really? Knowing you," Megan said, "I'll bet it's going to be a *late* entymology report."

"Tell you what, Josie," said their father. "Start now, and we can avoid the drama on Sunday night when you realize that you've run out of time."

Josie knew she shouldn't put off the work. She also knew that when Megan had a project to do, she always finished early. "I'll finish on time," Josie said. "I've got all weekend."

Aunt Kate let out a giggle. "Girls, you're giving your mother and me a flashback."

"Your Aunt Kate was always procrastinating," said Josie's mom, smiling.

"And your mother was always completely organized," said Aunt Kate.

"Let's just say I could have been a little more appreciative of Kate's artistic personality."

Josie sat up and announced, "That's what I have! An 'artistic personality.'"

Megan crossed her arms. "Whatever. All I know is, the day you finish a project on time is the day I promise to do your chores for a whole week."

Now their brother, Kevin, was interested. "My class is going to see who can bring in the most newspapers on Monday. Plus, we gotta do an essay on recycling. So, if I'm done on time, will you do my chores, too?"

"No way," Megan said. "This deal is for Josie only. You know why? Cuz I know I'll win."

Josie stood up and put her hands on her hips. "I will SO get my project done on time! And if I don't, I'll do YOUR chores, Megan. For TWO weeks."

Megan raised her hands over her head. "Yes!" she cried, as if she'd already won.

Illustrations: Cathi Mingus

Josie stomped into her bedroom and gazed at her desk. It was covered with books and old worksheets. Across the room, Megan's desk was neat, with all the pens in a cup and the books stacked neatly.

"Ugh," Josie said to herself.

"Need a hand?"

Josie turned to see Aunt Kate leaning against the side of the doorway, sipping her cup of coffee.

"You mean you'll help me?" Josie asked.

Aunt Kate walked over and sat on the edge of Josie's unmade bed. "Why not? Your dad's helping Kevin with his recycling project. Want me to brainstorm with you?"

"Ideas are never a problem," said Josie. "Getting started is what's hard for me."

Aunt Kate nodded. "Gotcha," she said. "You procrastinate, right?"

"What's that mean?"

"You put things off," said Kate. "And I'll bet I know why. Because you have that clutter all over in your workspace."

Looking at her heaped-up desk made Josie feel tired. "I always think it'd be easier if I could work over at Megan's desk."

"Ideas are never a problem," said Josie. "Getting started is what's hard for me."

Aunt Kate set down her cup of coffee. "How about if I sort through all this junk while you start on your project? By the time I'm done, you'll know exactly what you're going to do. You can just leap in and get going!"



Josie loved this idea. She sprawled on her bed and sketched on a pad while Aunt Kate whipped her desk into order. Josie decided that she was going to do a tiny accordion-folded booklet featuring a colorful insect on every page, with a description of each insect on the back.

Josie immediately began sketching. "I'm going to use my watercolor markers when I'm done drawing," she said. "And then I'm going to cut these drawings into little pieces—"

"Yes, yes," said Aunt Kate, "but do you know where your scissors are? Do you have all your markers? You'll be needing glue, too, I think."

Josie shrugged. "Um, I thought I'd look for them when I needed them."

"If you're like me, you'll start looking around for missing things, and then you'll notice something on TV, and then you'll sit down, and before you know it…"

"I'll be procrastinating," Josie said. "I get it."

Aunt Kate nodded. "Let's get our materials together and put them all in one place."

Josie went to gather her supplies. Locating the glue took a little bit longer than she had thought it would. All she could find was her mom's slow-drying fabric glue. "Oh, well," Josie shrugged. "It has to work on paper, too, doesn't it?"



When everything was ready and within reach, Josie got to work. She copied insect pictures from books and then hand-colored them. Once she got started, she found it hard to stop. By bedtime Saturday night, she was more than half done.

When Megan came in for bed, Josie noted her surprise. "Gee, Josie, you have enough bugs here for a whole encyclopedia."

"You mean insects," corrected Josie. "And yes, there are a lot of them. Thirty million species."

Megan counted on her fingers. "So, that means you've only got about twenty-nine million, nine hundred ninety-nine thousand, nine hundred seventy-five left to go!"

"Ha, ha," Josie said without a smile.

"Good luck finishing on time!" Megan said, way too sweetly.

Josie held two fingers up on her head like antennas. *"Pentatomidae,"* she whispered.

"Penta-what?" asked Megan.

"Your new nickname," Josie said. "Stinkbug!"

On Sunday, Josie wasted no time getting dressed and eating breakfast. The hours flew, and by late afternoon the pictures and descriptions were finished. All that was left was folding and gluing the tiny book together.

Aunt Kate peeked in. "Mind if I get a preview?" she asked.

Josie proudly demonstrated how the pictures would fold on top of one another.

"Clever!" said Aunt Kate.

Josie held up the bottle of white fabric glue. "All I have to do is glue everything together and lay it out on this newspaper. I'll have all night to make sure it dries completely."

"Good going," said Aunt Kate. "Here it is, 5:30 Sunday night, and you're done!"



Josie would never have admitted this to Megan, but she was grateful that she had started the project early. The insect book would never have been finished on time if Aunt Kate hadn't been there to encourage her.

Josie threw her arms around her aunt's waist. "I'm so glad you were here this weekend! I couldn't have done it without you," she said.

"My pleasure. It was fun to help," said Aunt Kate. "I only wish I could hang out with you more often, Josie. Too bad my plane leaves at the crack of dawn tomorrow."

At that moment, Josie spied Megan peeking in at the door.

"Look, Megan," Josie said, dragging her sister by the hand. "Come see what I did!"

Megan looked down at the colorful booklet.

"Wow, Josie," she said, obviously impressed. "These pictures are so tiny. They're like little gems. Mrs. Layton is going to give you an A for sure."



"Yeah, but that's not the best part. These pages are FINISHED," declared Josie. "Done! And I am the winner!"

Megan raised her eyebrow. "Now, wait a minute. You're not the winner until tomorrow morning when we're both on the school bus."

"No fair!" said Josie.

"Yes, it is," Megan said. "You know how you're always forgetting things. I won't admit to losing until I know your bug book is packed up and on its way to school."

Josie almost started to complain, but then she thought better of it. Why not be cool? After all, the project was done. There was no way she was going to forget it and let Megan end up being the winner. Not after all this work.

That night, after the book was assembled, Josie washed her sticky hands, turned out the lights, and fell into a sleep so deep that she almost couldn't wake up early the next morning when Aunt Kate crept in to say good-bye.

"Mom?" asked Josie.

"No, it's me—Aunt Kate—wearing your mom's pajamas. Lost luggage, remember?"

"Oh, yeah," Josie yawned.

"Time for me to go. But I'll see you again this summer, Josie girl," Kate whispered. "Be good."

Josie felt Aunt Kate's kiss on her cheek, then fell back asleep. She didn't wake up again until sunshine streamed in the window.

For a moment, she wondered where she was. Megan's bed was empty. The clock blinked 7:45. "Oh, no!" said Josie, sitting up. "I've overslept!"

She ran to the bathroom and beat on the door. "Let me in!" she pleaded. "I'm late!"

Megan, who had a mouthful of toothpaste, opened the door.

"Hey, why didn't you wake me up?" Josie asked. "You know the bus will be here in twenty minutes!"

Megan spit and said, "Don't blame me."

Josie lunged for her own toothbrush, muttering, "I'll bet she just wants me to be late so that I'll forget my project."

"Hey, why didn't you wake me up?" Josie asked. "You know the bus will be here in twenty minutes!"

In no time flat, Josie was back in her room, pulling on some jeans and gathering up her backpack. It was already 7:52. She ran to the other side of her bed to pick up her insect book from where she had left it lying out on newspaper.



Josie felt her stomach thud. The newspaper wasn't there.

Megan! thought Josie as she tore down the hall to the kitchen. Megan was sitting at the breakfast table, eating cereal. "Mom! Mom!" Josie cried. "Megan took my report!"

Megan's jaw dropped. "I did not!" she said. "And anyway, Mom's not here. She and Dad took Aunt Kate to the airport."

"I had my insect book drying on a piece of newspaper. And now it's gone." Josie's eyes began to sting with tears.

"You mean the book is gone?" Megan asked. "Or is the newspaper gone, too?"

"Both," Josie replied. "And it didn't just get up and walk away." Josie tried not to let her tears spill, but she couldn't help it. "Megan, I never knew you could be so mean."

At first, Josie thought that Megan was angry. But then she noticed something else. Megan looked hurt.

"Oh, Josie," Megan said. "Believe me, I'd never do anything that creepy. I promise."

"Then where could it be?" Josie asked. "Boy, I wish Mom were here. She can find anything."

"So can we," said Megan. "You and me. I'll help. Together, we'll solve the mystery."

Josie felt a little weird having Megan on her side for once. But she also felt better. Unless Megan was a better actress than anyone had ever dreamed, Josie felt she could trust her this time.

Megan had to be innocent.

The two of them were making their way to their room when they bumped into Kevin, who was slinging his backpack over his shoulder. Josie's eyes widened when she saw what he held in his hand—the *Daily Courier.*

"Kevin," she said, squeezing her eyes shut,



"You didn't take any newspaper from my room this morning, did you?"

"Uh, yeah," said Kevin. "You mean the one lying on the floor by your bed?"

"How could you?" Megan demanded.

"What's the big deal?" Kevin asked.

Josie tore the papers from Kevin's grasp. She pulled them apart until she came to a sticky section. "This is it," Josie said.

Carefully, Josie tried to peel the papers apart without tearing anything. She held her breath, waiting for her insect book to appear.

Megan gasped. "It's not there," she said softly.

"Of course it isn't," Kevin said. "I wouldn't throw away Josie's art thing."

"Then where'd you put it?" Josie asked.

"Nowhere," he said. "I'm telling you, there was nothing on the newspaper when I took it. I thought you had already packed it up for school."

Josie bounced up and down on her toes. "But that's impossible!"

"I'm telling you the truth," said Kevin. "Now, if you'll excuse me, it's eight o'clock and I've got to get outside. Kyle's parents are picking me up today."

"Eight o'clock?" Josie had only five short minutes before the bus pulled up. She squeezed the sides of her head, trying to make herself think faster. "O.K. If Kevin didn't take my book, and you didn't, and I didn't, then who did?"

"Mom or Dad?" suggested Megan.

"I don't see how," said Josie. "They left very early this morning to drop Aunt Kate off at the airport, remember?"

Megan froze. "I know who took the book."

Do you know who took the book? Hold this page up to a mirror to find out.

Answer

"It was Aunt Kate!" Megan said excitedly.

"Follow me." Josie trailed Megan to the guest room. There on the floor, in a heap, lay a robe, pajamas, and slippers.

"These must be the pj's that Aunt Kate wore," Megan said. "Mom always puts her things away."

"Yeah," Josie said, "so?"

Megan picked up a slipper, turned it over, and grinned.

"My insect report!" Josie squealed. "I get it. Aunt Kate came into our room. It was dark. That weird glue still wasn't dry. She stepped on the paper..."

"...and walked away with it," Megan said.

"That is SO Aunt Kate," said Josie.

Just then, they heard the school bus. "C'mon!" shouted Megan, grabbing Josie's wrist. The girls were out of breath when they climbed aboard.

"Well, Josie," huffed Megan. "Guess I'm doing your chores for the week."

"Yes, I won," Josie said. "But if you hadn't solved the mystery, I would've lost. So I owe you one."

"You owe me two," Megan said. "You called me a stinkbug, remember?"

"Yeah. I'm sorry."

"You should be," said Megan. "It's stink INSECT. Haven't you learned anything?"

"Har har," said Josie. "Now you're really bugging me." Both girls laughed.

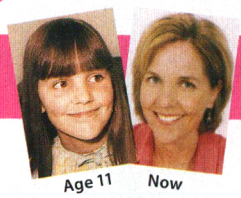
"How about we both clear the dishes next week?" Megan asked. "Together."

"Deal." Josie raised her hand, and Megan slapped it. ★

Meet the Author



Kathleen O'Dell


Age 11 Now

For a short while, we did have a genuine mystery at my house—single shoes were disappearing. My son discovered that Max, our pug, had stored a pile of flip-flops and tennis shoes in the backyard!

Earth Day is April 22. We're celebrating!

Puzzle Palooza

Hey, Whose Backpack?

Amelia, Bree, Kat, and Juliet are excited about their weekend at camp. Their bags got mixed up with everyone else's stuff, though, and no one remembered to label her own bag. Figure out which bag belongs to which girl, and write the letter of the correct bag next to each girl.



Mountain Climbing

Crack the code to find the name of a mountain range in the United States.

T H E X G
R E A T X S M O K y
X M O U N T A I N S

Hint: Try reading across the mountaintops.

Answer: _____

Photo Fun

Chloé and her older sister reached the top of Mount Washburn! Use the clues to figure out the missing altitude.

1. Begin with 4,582.
2. Add the number of feet in a mile. _____
3. Add the number of days in a regular year. _____
4. Add the number of eggs you get in a typical carton. _____
5. Add the number of leaves on a lucky clover. _____



Answer: _____

Illustrations: Karen Walcott

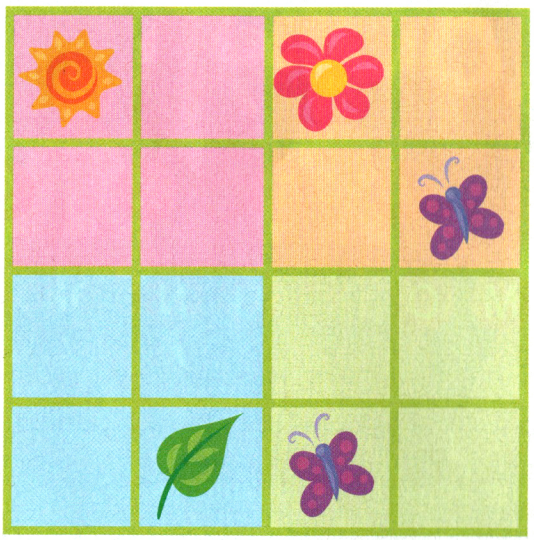
The idea for Sun-doku was submitted by this issue's Puzzle Pal. Vanessa W. Age 12, California



Sun-doku

Put a sun, a flower, a leaf, or a butterfly in each square so that each column, row, and colored box uses every picture once.



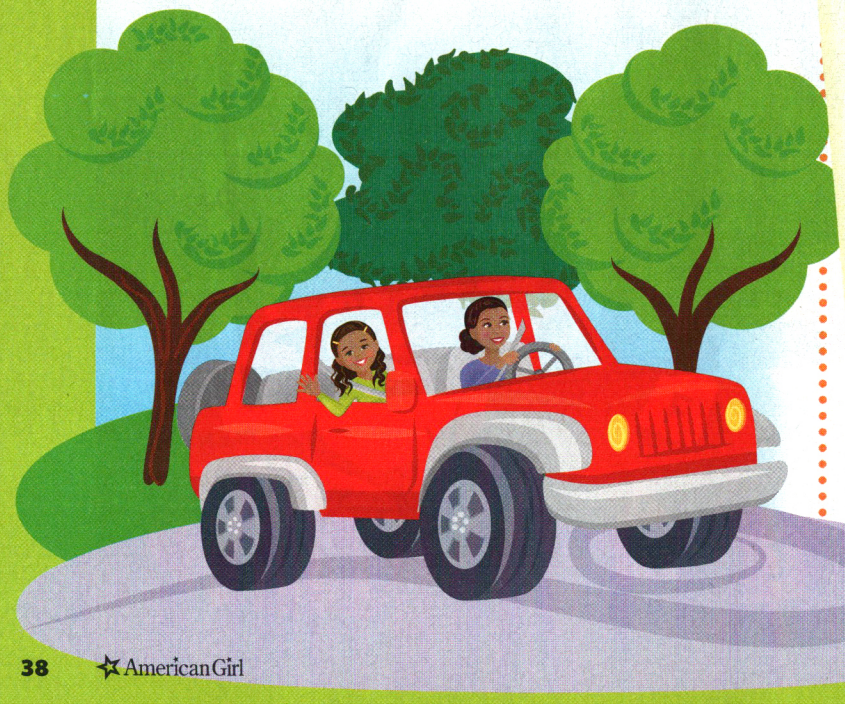


Want to be an **AG Puzzle Pal?** Send your original puzzles, secret codes, or brainteasers to the address on **page 7.**

Wheel Tough Riddle

This regular Jeep actually has six wheels. How?

Answer: _____



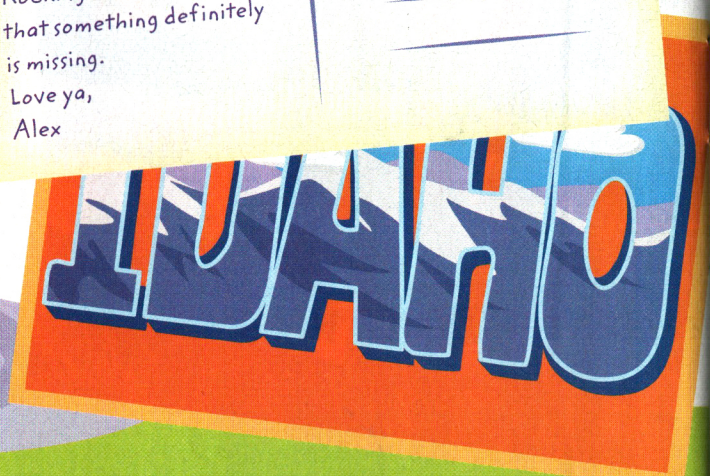
Wish You Were Here

Read the postcard. What's missing?

Dear Taylor,
Lizzie, Jana, and I are having the best time in Idaho. We've gone rafting and fishing. We've spent a lot of time hiking and riding horses at a ranch called the Rocking Q. Still, we all agree that something definitely is missing.
Love ya,
Alex

IDAHO MAIN OFFICE March 2008 USPS

Answer:



Maple Maze

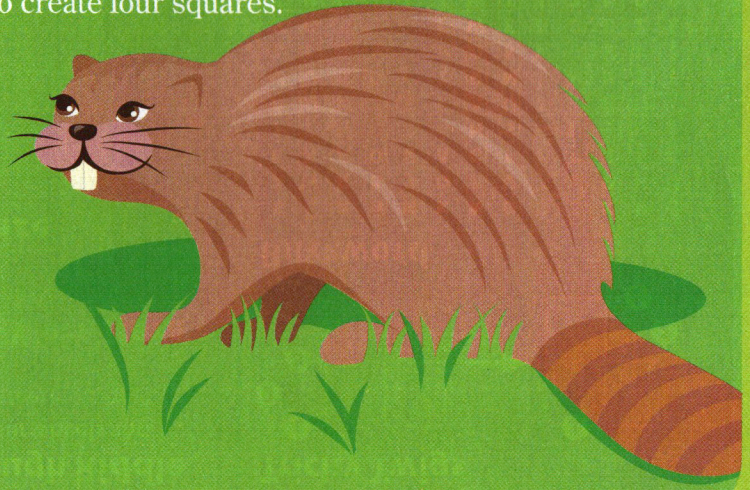
Find your way through the maze on this tree stump.



Tricky Twigs

Move three twigs to create four squares.





This Issue's Buzzword is... gloaming

All of the descriptive words hidden in this puzzle relate to this issue's Buzzword. Look for them forward, backward, up, down, and diagonally.

Hidden words:
dusk
sunset
twilight
indigo
orange
pink
beautiful
evening
glow

G	L	A	W	N	K	N	G	R	E	K	P	J
X	W	R	K	J	O	E	V	T	V	Q	H	U
E	K	A	O	R	A	G	F	Z	E	J	S	A
R	T	N	G	Z	O	N	S	W	N	S	D	O
P	W	K	I	B	E	A	U	T	I	F	U	L
M	O	B	D	P	Z	R	N	L	N	R	S	F
L	L	L	N	J	V	O	S	P	G	H	K	J
S	G	T	I	U	B	W	E	A	C	B	Z	L
T	H	G	I	L	I	W	T	I	Z	L	O	P
Q	U	O	K	L	F	R	E	P	W	U	y	N

How to say it: GLOW-ming
What it means: twilight, dusk
One way to use it: Kara's favorite part of the day was the gloaming, when the first stars appeared and the temperature cooled.



Answer Box

Hey, Whose Backpack?
1. F; 2. H; 3. C; 4. J

Mountain Climbing
The Great Smoky Mountains.

Photo Fun
2. 5,280; 3. 365; 4. 12; 5. 4. Mount Washburn's altitude is 10,243 feet.

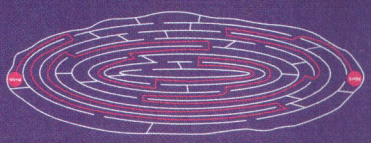
Sun-doku



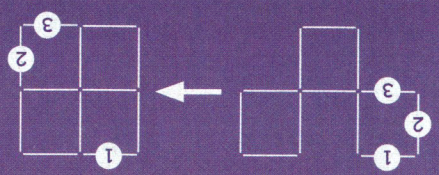
Wheel Tough Riddle
The Jeep has four wheels and a spare, plus a steering wheel.

Wish You Were Here
The only thing missing is u

Maple Maze



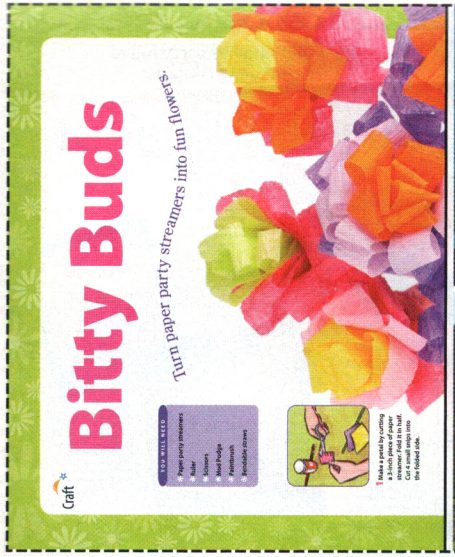
Tricky Twigs



Buzzword

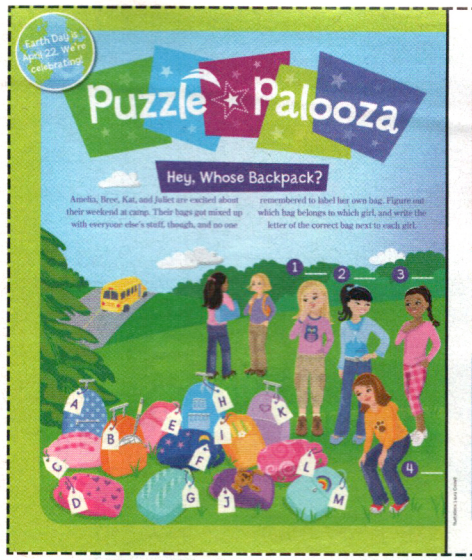
G	L	A	W	N	K	N	G	R	E	K	P	J
X	W	R	K	J	O	E	V	T	V	Q	H	U
E	K	A	O	R	A	G	F	Z	E	J	S	A
R	T	N	G	Z	O	N	S	W	N	S	D	O
P	W	K	I	B	E	A	U	T	I	F	U	L
M	O	B	D	P	Z	R	N	L	N	R	S	F
L	L	L	N	J	V	O	S	P	G	H	K	J
S	G	T	I	U	B	W	E	A	C	B	Z	L
T	H	G	I	L	I	W	T	I	Z	L	O	P
Q	U	O	K	L	F	R	E	P	W	U	y	N

Illustrations: Susan McAliley





A



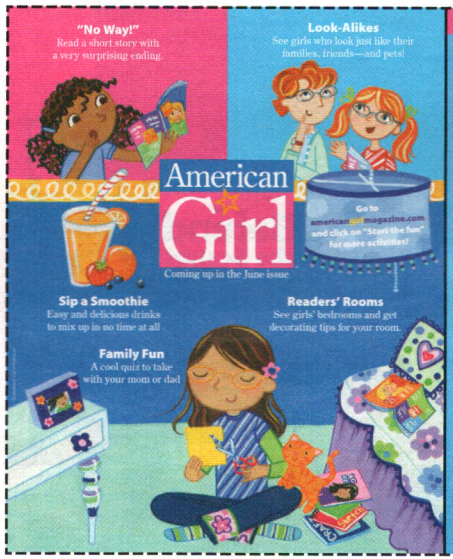


B





C





D

Mini Mag

With the Mini Mag, you can make a miniature copy of *American Girl* for your doll or stuffed animal. All you need are scissors and a stapler. Read the directions all the way through before you begin.

1 Cut out each pair of pages only on the dotted lines. Be sure to cut around the tabs marked with the letters A, B, C, and D.



2 Stack the pages on top of one another in the order shown below, with the letters on the tabs facing up.



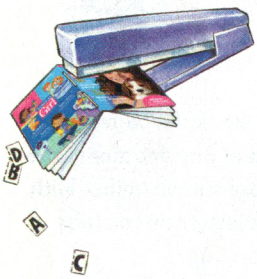
Continued

Mini Mag

3 Fold the stack of pages in half along the solid line in the center. The cover of the magazine should now be on top. Run your fingernail down the folded edge to help the pages lie flat.



4 Open the folded stack. Staple along the center line. Cut off the tabs, and you're done!











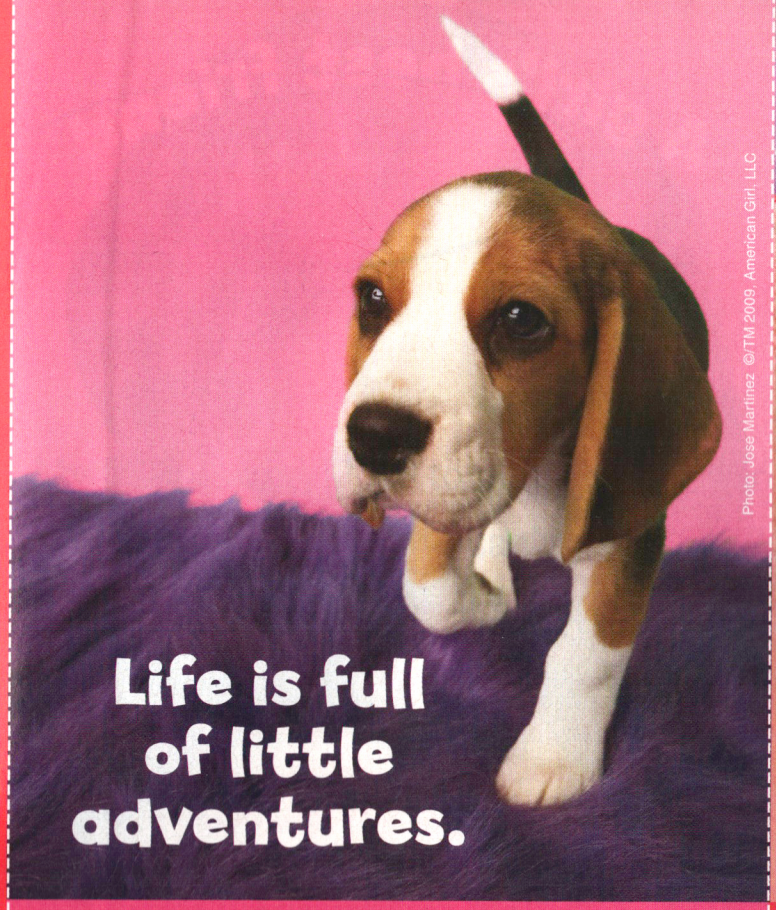


Photo: Jose Martinez ©TM 2009, American Girl, LLC

American Girl

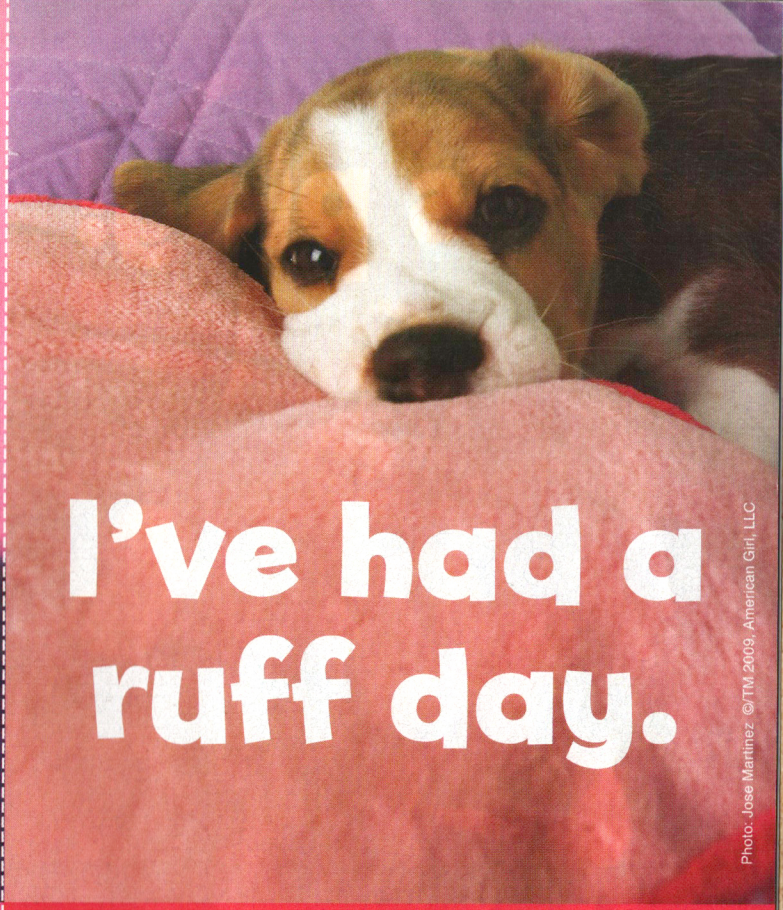


Photo: Jose Martinez ©TM 2009, American Girl, LLC

American Girl

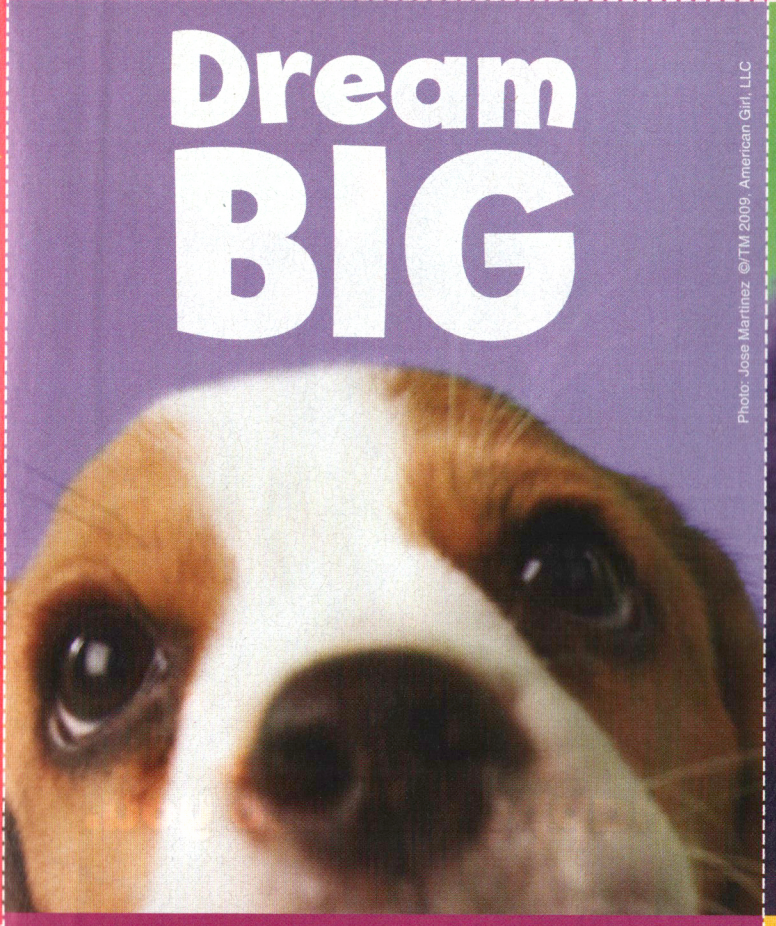


Photo: Jose Martinez ©TM 2009, American Girl, LLC

American Girl

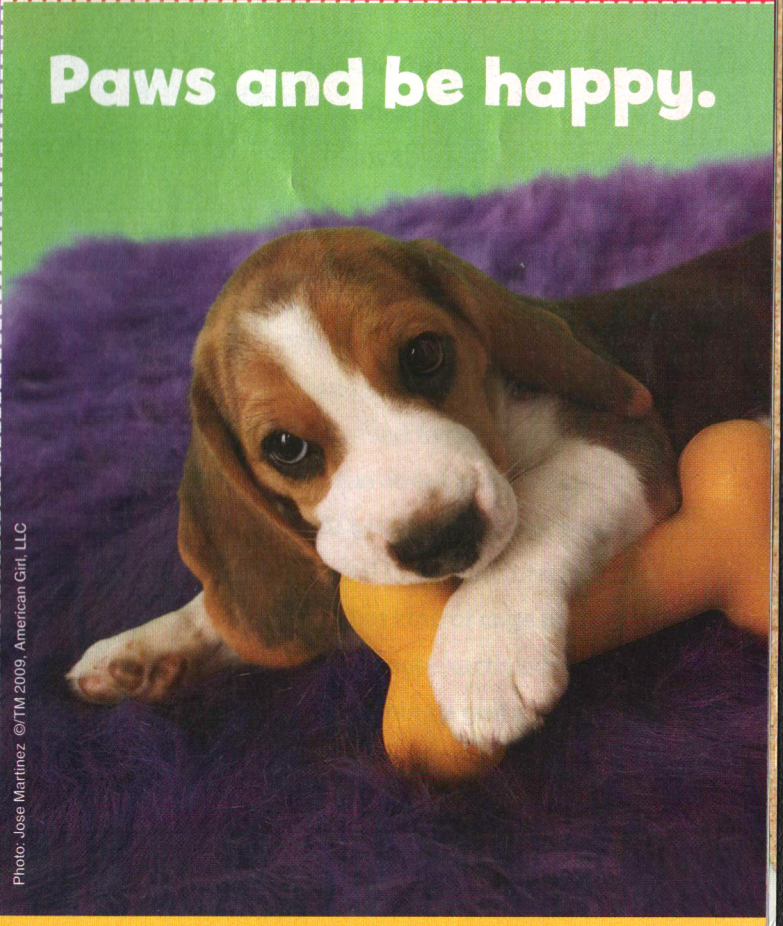


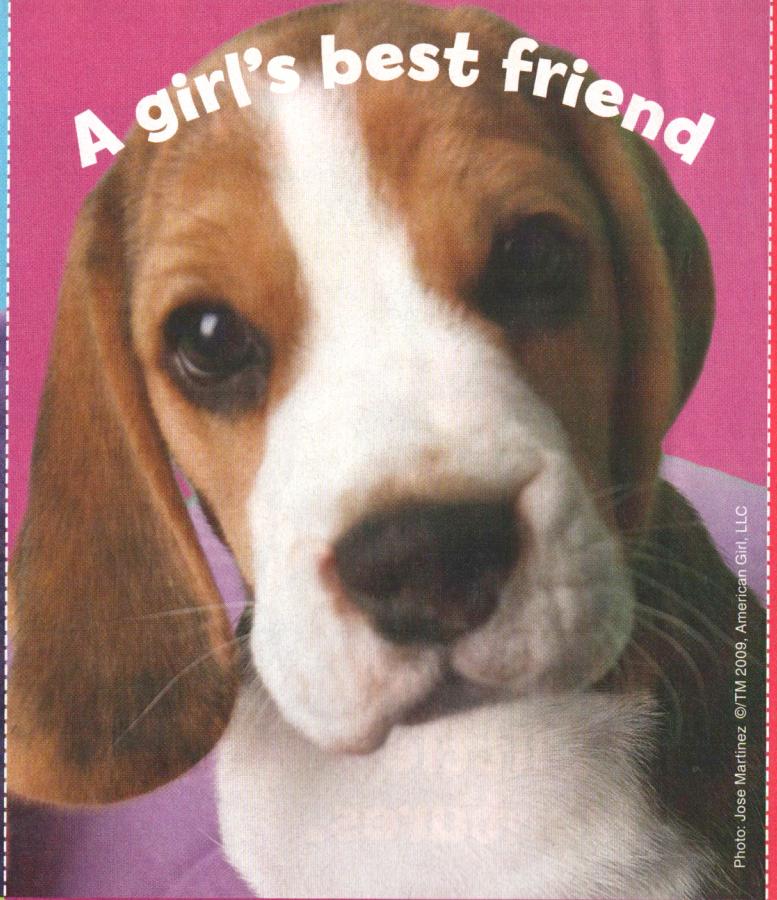
Photo: Jose Martinez ©TM 2009, American Girl, LLC

American Girl

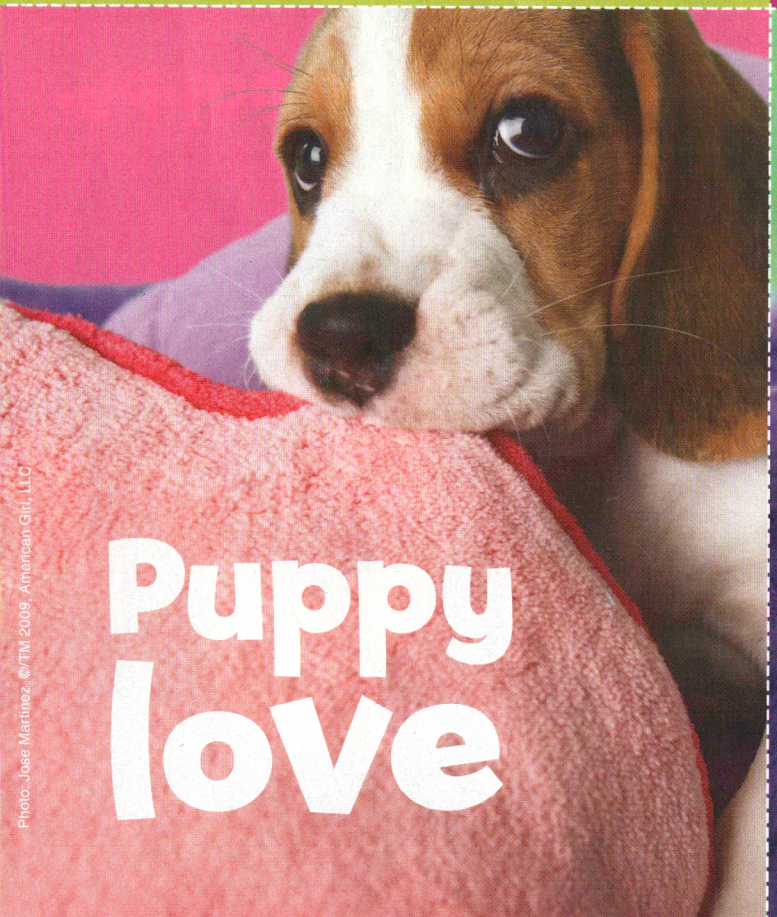
Posters Carefully cut along the dotted lines to remove your posters.



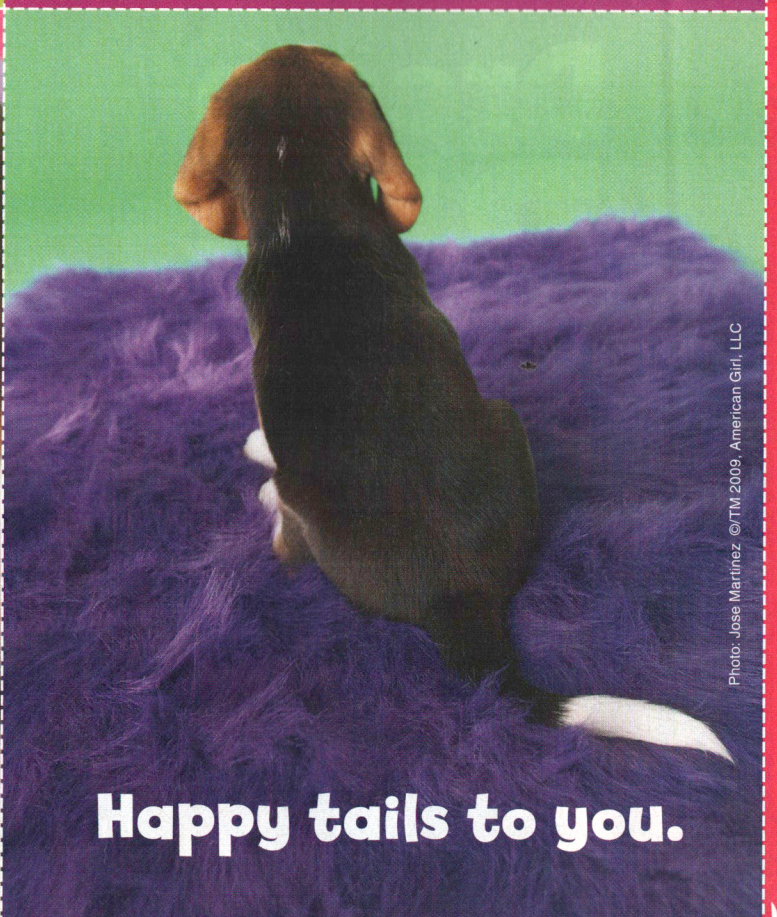
American Girl®



American Girl®



American Girl®



American Girl®

HELP!

Dear *American Girl,*

My friends and I love to play Four Square. But it's getting to where we can't get through one game without arguing. It's so frustrating!

No Fun



You need to agree on the rules ahead of time. For example, if the ball hits a line, is it in or is it out? It also might help to take turns being the referee. The ref can judge if the ball is in or out, and everyone must agree to stand by whatever the ref decides. If you still can't get through a game without fighting, it might be time to try a different game for a while.

Dear *American Girl,*

I have a problem. I wake up late, and sometimes I miss breakfast. Then I get hungry in school. What should I do?

Breakfast Misser

It's easier to get up in the morning if you go to bed at the same time every night and get up at the same time every day—even on weekends. Try doing that for a few weeks and see if it helps. You can also pack breakfast treats such as granola bars, trail mix, yogurt, fruit, and dry cereal to take with you on mornings that are just too busy for a sit-down meal.

★

Dear *American Girl,*

I'm tall for my age. I've even been around grown-ups who are shorter than I am. It's not that I don't want to be tall. I just feel weird.

Giraffe

If you don't make a big deal out of being tall, other people probably won't, either. If someone mentions your height, say, "Yeah, I'm tall," and change the subject. Being tall is what makes you unique, and you should be proud of it. When you show that you are comfortable with your height, other people will be, too.

★

Dear *American Girl,*

I want a guinea pig! They're cute, furry, and lovable. But my mom and dad ask me why I should get one and I have nothing to say.

Guinea Pig Girl

It sounds like you don't know much about guinea pigs. To be a good pet owner, you need to find out everything you can about guinea pigs before you get one. How much care do they need? What kind of food do they eat? What kind of cage do they need? Finding out exactly what's involved in owning a guinea pig will help show your parents that you're responsible enough to have one.

★

Illustrations: Laura Cornell

MORE HELP!

Dear *American Girl,*

My friend recently got a cell phone. Now all she does is text people. It doesn't matter where she is—she's always on her phone. Sometimes she ignores that I'm with her. I've asked her to stop, but she still does it.

Ignored

The way your friend is acting is just plain rude. Next time, say, "If you're going to text, I'm going to go. See you later." Or say, "Can you do that another time? It's really bugging me." Remember how this makes you feel, so when *you* get a phone, you'll be sensitive to your friends' feelings.

★

Dear *American Girl,*

When I want to tell my mom something private, I never know how to start. I end up keeping it locked inside me. I feel awful when this happens!

Tell my mom?

Pick a time when you and your mom are both in the car, making dinner, or folding laundry. Take a deep breath and say, "Mom, there's something I want to tell you." Or you can write your mom a letter telling her you want to talk but don't know how to start. Getting started is the hardest part, but once you start talking, you'll feel a lot better.

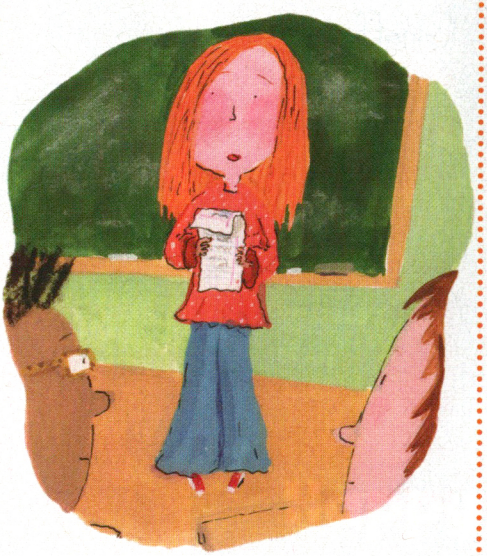
★

Dear *American Girl,*

I blush about everything! It's getting a little old. What should I do?

Always Blushing

Some people blush more than others. Getting upset will just make you blush more, so try not to get too worked up about it. The next time you feel yourself blushing, take a deep breath and laugh. Letting go of some tension should help you relax. You can also go to the washroom and put cool water on your cheeks. But whatever happens, remember that by the time your blush has passed, people will have forgotten all about it.



★

Dear *American Girl,*

I made up a huge lie, and my friends found out. Now I feel really bad about it. All of my friends forgave me except for one person. She won't talk to me anymore. It really hurts to lose a friend. What should I do?

Sorry!

Try sending this girl a card. Tell her that you're sorry and that you feel terrible about what happened. Say you miss her and you hope she'll give you another chance. Then see what happens. Give her time, because some people take longer to forgive than others. There's no guarantee that she'll forgive you, but it's worth a try.

even MORE HELP!



Dear *American Girl,*

I recently broke my arm, and my friend keeps teasing me about it. When I tell her that I don't like it, she says she's just joking. But by the next day, she starts again. I need help!

Not Laughing

The next time your friend says something mean about your arm, say, "I've asked you not to tease me anymore. Please stop." If she says she's just joking, say, "It isn't funny, and I want you to stop." That should make your point clear. If she still teases you, avoid her and spend more time with girls who are nicer to be around.

★

Dear *American Girl,*

I play piano and I don't like taking lessons. My mom and dad say that a lot of people regret not taking music lessons when they were young. Is this true? Any advice?

Music Girl

It's true that many people who can't play an instrument wish they could. If you're sick of lessons, change your routine. Ask your teacher if you can work from a new music book. If you love the songs you're learning, you might not notice that they're harder to play. Start practice with a song you like, and give yourself a little reward for practicing. If you still hate playing piano after a few months, talk to your parents about taking a break for a while.

★

Dear *American Girl,*

I want to see all these PG-13 movies, but my mother won't let me see them. She thinks they are inappropriate. I know she's probably right, but I still want to see them.

Movie Misser

If your friends are seeing these movies, it's tough to feel left out. But your mom is not going to change her mind just because your friends can do something that you cannot. If you're curious about one particular movie, ask your mom to watch it with you and talk about her concerns as they come up. You'll learn why she feels the way she does. You might also find that you're not missing much by not seeing these movies.

★

Dear *American Girl,*

I have a problem with saving money. When I really want something, I start saving for it, but then when I see something else, I buy it. Any ideas?

Saving...UGH!

The next time you go shopping, bring a few dollars to spend on a snack or a small treat, and leave the rest of your money at home. If you don't have money to spend, you won't spend it. Also, when you see something you think you want more than the item you're saving for, think it over for a day or two before going back to buy it. That way, you'll make sure you're buying the things you *really* want.

still MORE HELP!



Dear *American Girl,*

I'm almost 12, and I can't last a night away from home. Every time I go to sleepovers, I end up getting so homesick that I can't get to sleep, and I go home. It's really humiliating. Is there anything I can do?

Sleepless

Before the party, make a "crisis card" with your mom with tips on what to do when you start feeling homesick. For example, you can take five deep breaths, splash water on your face, repeat "I can do this" to yourself, or play a handheld game. If you can get through one sleepover, even if you don't sleep much, the next one will be easier.

★

Dear *American Girl,*

My brother never leaves me alone! When my friends come over, he is always in the middle of what we're doing. Should I leave him out?

Brother Bother

Talk to your brother before your friends come over. Tell him that you want to spend some time with your friends alone but that you'll all include him in a game or another activity. If he can look forward to having some fun with you, it might be easier for him to leave you alone for a little while.

★

Dear *American Girl,*

I need some talking tips! When I call my friends, I run out of things to say. I wish I could be more outgoing. How can I stop being so shy?

Frustrated

When you run out of things to say, ask your friend some questions and let her do the talking. The best questions are the ones that can't just be answered "yes" or "no." Really listen to what your friend has to say, and keep asking questions about her replies. Eventually, she'll say something that will make you feel like talking, and you'll be back on track.

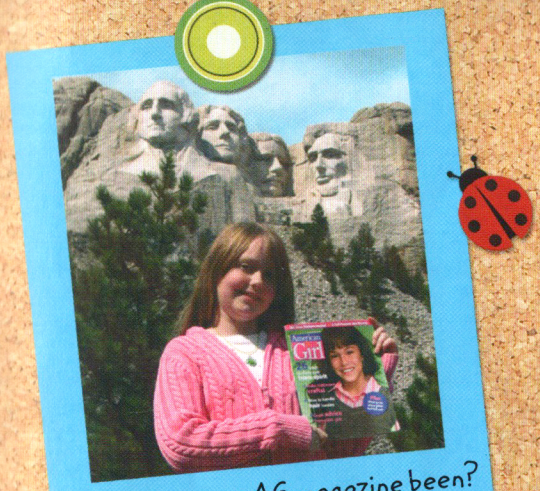
★

Advice from You

"Every night, I used to trip over toys and climb into an unmade bed. Then I had an idea. Before bedtime, I would set a timer for five minutes and clean an area of my room. On Monday, I would put clean sheets on my bed. On Tuesday, I would put my toys away. On Wednesday, I would throw out trash, and so on. Then, at the end of the week, my whole room would be clean."

Carolyn S.
Age 12, Indiana

Need advice? Got advice? Write:
Help!
***American Girl* magazine**
8400 Fairway Place
Middleton, WI 53562



Where has your AG magazine been? Ingrid V. from Colorado took her magazine to Mount Rushmore!

Look at this great AG magazine-themed butterfly by Taylor S., age 12, from Georgia. Go to "Start the fun" at americangirlmagazine.com to see more.



Go to americangirlmagazine.com and click on "Start the fun" to see where other readers have taken their AG magazines.

Behind the Scenes

We played with puppies and had a pajama party!

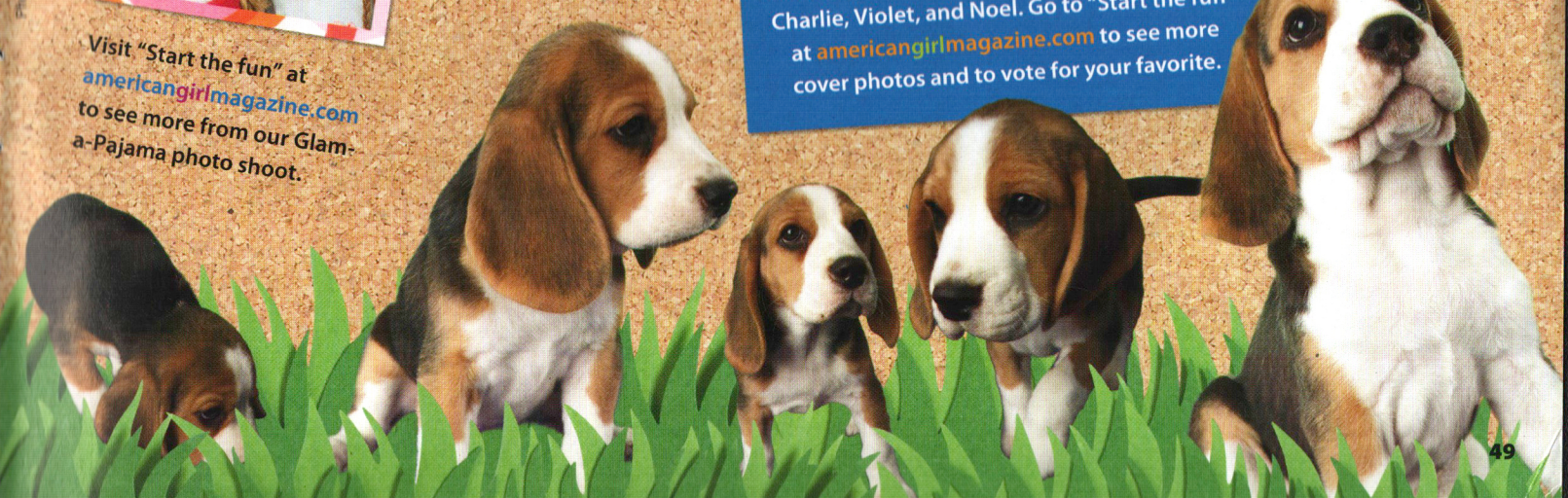




Visit "Start the fun" at americangirlmagazine.com to see more from our Glam-a-Pajama photo shoot.



For the cover and posters, we used three different nine-week-old beagle puppies named Charlie, Violet, and Noel. Go to "Start the fun" at americangirlmagazine.com to see more cover photos and to vote for your favorite.



Photos: Jose Mantas

Look-Alikes

See girls who look just like their families, friends—and pets!



"No Way!"

Read a short story with a very surprising ending.

American Girl

Coming up in the May/June issue

Go to americangirlmagazine.com and click on "Start the fun" for more activities!



Sip a Smoothie

Easy and delicious drinks to mix up in no time at all

Readers' Rooms

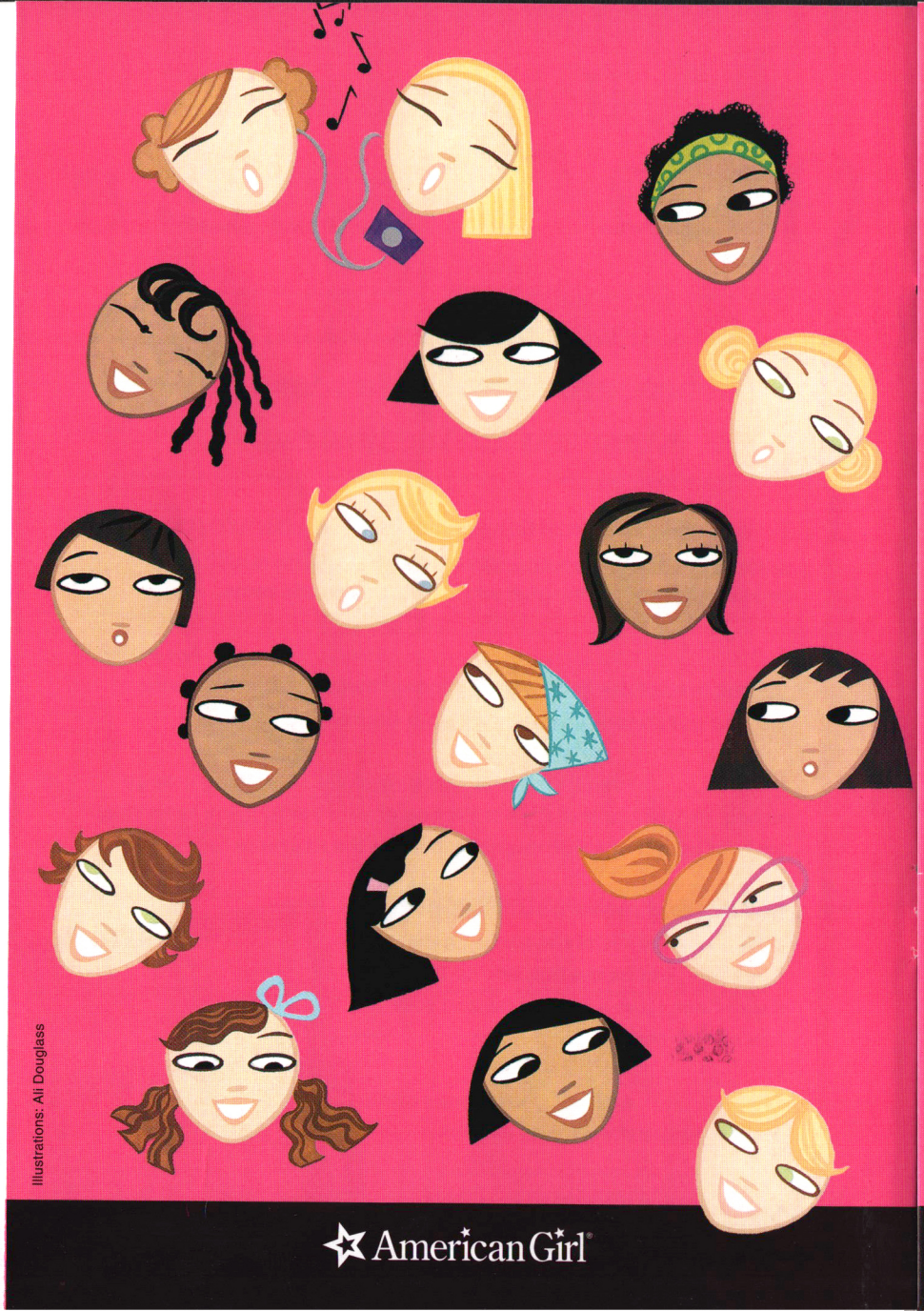
See girls' bedrooms and get decorating tips for your room.

Family Fun

A cool quiz to take with your mom or dad



Illustrations: Carol Yoshizumi

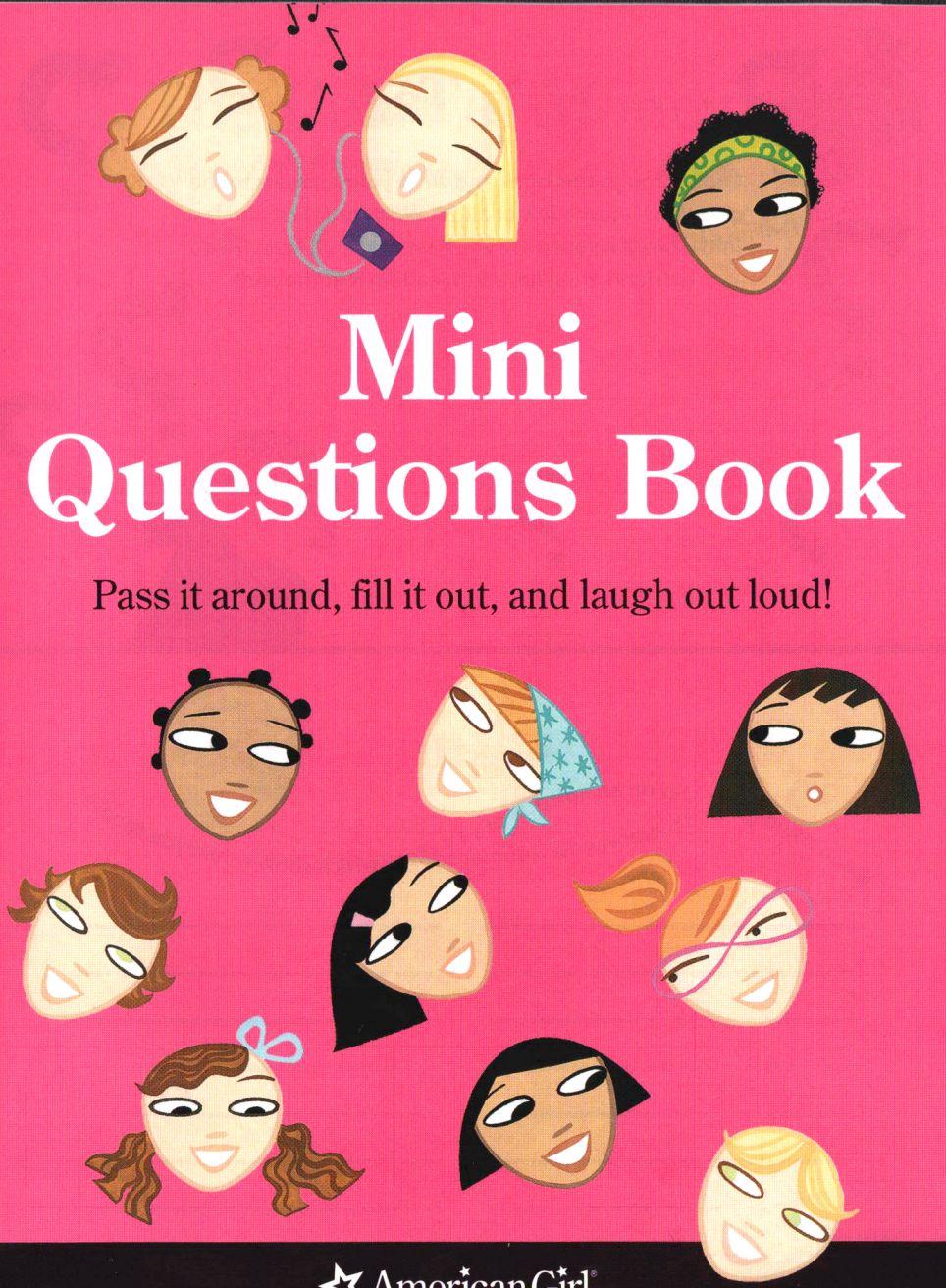


Illustrations: Ali Douglass

American Girl®

Mini Questions Book

Pass it around, fill it out, and laugh out loud!



American Girl®

Let's Talk!

Look through this book and write your answers to the questions—just a few or all 20. Write your first and last initial next to your answers. Pass the book from friend to friend, then have fun reading it at the end!



1. Starstruck

If you could guest star on an episode of a TV show, which show would you choose?

Illustrations: Ali Douglass

2. The Color of Money



What would you do FOR a million dollars?

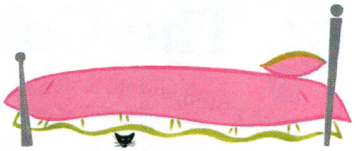
What would you do WITH a million dollars?

3. Fine Dining

If you could have dinner with someone famous, who would it be?



4. Bed Check



Stop. Think. What's under your bed? 'Fess up!

5. Neat Treat



What's your all-time favorite treat to eat? Is it something salty or something sweet?

6. For Reeeeel!



Name your top pick for movie night.

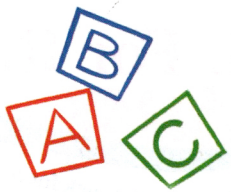
7. Good Hair Day

Would you rather have curly or straight hair?

If you could dye it, would you? What color?



8. Kinder-Kid



What was your favorite thing about kindergarten?

9. Sense-ibility

If you had to give up a sense,
which would you give up—scent, sound, touch, taste, or sight?



10. Quotable You!

What's your favorite saying? (Is it in your own words or something you heard?)



11. Charming



Do you have any good-luck charms? If so, what are they?
Do you think they really work?

12. Animal Instincts

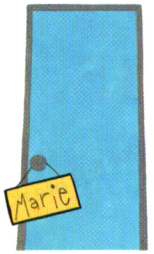
Are you shy like a cat? Peppy like a puppy?
What animal do you think is most like you?





13. Name Game

What name would you like instead of your own?



14. Menu Mania

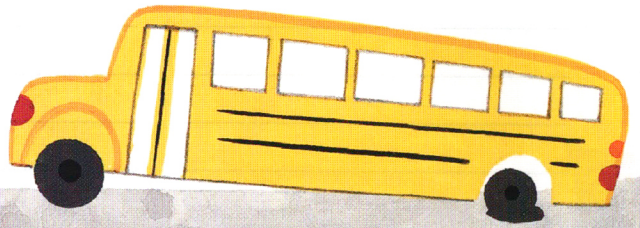
If you had to eat only one food for a year, what food would you eat?



15. Bus Stop

Your bus breaks down on a field trip.

What do you hope you have in your backpack?



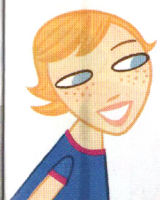
16. Fear Facts



What is your biggest fear?

17. Trading Places

What person would you most like to trade places with?





18. Shop 'til You Drop

In what store in the mall would you like to spend the night?



19. Girl Power

What superpower would you most like to have?



How to be a Great Hostess

It's always fun to go to a party, but here are a few tips to remember when you are the hostess.

1. **Turn on the charm.** A hostess's number-one job is to make all her guests feel comfortable and welcome. Greet everyone with a smile and tell each guest how glad you are that she could come.

2. **During the party, keep your eyes on the action.** Are people getting tired of the game you're playing? Switch to a new activity. Do your guests look hungry? Bring out the snacks!

3. **Laugh it off.** Even if you've planned carefully, something may go wrong. Remember that it's not the end of your party. If you keep your sense of humor, the flub might even make the day more fun.

4. **Mingle and move your feet.** Go ahead—be the life of the party. Chat away, laugh lots, and be the first one on the dance floor. Have a good time, and your friends will, too.

5. **Be yourself.** After all, your friends came to your party because they like you.



Photo: Jose Martinez